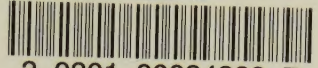


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Women Characters in Richard Wagner

A STUDY IN "THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG"

BY
LOUISE BRINK, PH.D.

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CONTENTS

Abbreviations	vi
Foreword	vii

PART I. THE PSYCHIC PROBLEM

Chapter	I. The Problem Stated by the Poet and by Psycho-analysis	1
Chapter	II. The Infantile Basis of Character	16
Chapter	III. The Relation of the Child to the Parent	25

PART II. THE PROBLEM IN THE DRAMA

Chapter	IV. The Bondage to Infantile Goals	39
Chapter	V. The Beginning of the Child's Freedom	54
Chapter	VI. The Daughter's Struggle for Freedom	66
Chapter	VII. The Awakening to Adult Love	80
Chapter	VIII. The Victory of Love in the Face of Defeat	101
Bibliography		119
Index		123

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS OF WORKS CITED FROM
WAGNER

Br.	Briefe
Bth.	Beethoven
G.	Götterdämmerung
K.d.Zkft.	Kunst der Zukunft
Mttl.	Mitteilung an meine Freunde
O.u.D.	Oper und Drama
R.	Rheingold
S.	Siegfried
W.	Walküre

FOREWORD

The life and works of an artistic creator become the heritage of all mankind. The way into Richard Wagner's estate is a well beaten road. Over it many have come and gone to tell of the wonders they have found. The treasures of his art have been explored many times and much has been brought from them to enrich the world of thought and of artistic appreciation. His character has been the subject of extravagant adulation or, often, of merciless disparagement.

The passing of time has brought a new perspective upon Wagner's character as it mellows also the artistic treasure that lies within this domain which was his. Not this alone. It has brought to light at least two new paths, scarcely trodden as yet. These lead into secret caverns where the richness of the artist's treasure becomes more fully revealed. The one path is that of a fuller and franker knowledge of the facts of Wagner's life. Julius Kapp has been a pioneer here, collecting and making public material hitherto unrevealed. Though much of this is a record of human weakness, yet Kapp's spirit of research has in it nothing of caviling malice. It is distinguished rather by that warmer appreciation which recognizes the significance of the faults and the virtues of human character. It is the spirit of understanding which finds the value of a life as well as the meaning of art not in faults or virtues as these are manifest in themselves, but in life's struggle, which turns sometimes to success, sometimes to failure.

The other pathway, often touching close upon this trail blazed by Kapp, attempts to penetrate even more deeply into the sources of this conflict. It enters to discover beneath the artist's life and his works those fundamental facts of the psychic life which determine character and strive for expression through art. This is the path of psychoanalysis, a school of psychology which has entered into the unconscious background of individual life and which seeks to know this same unconscious source of artistic productions. The spontaneous outpourings of Wagner himself, as found in his letters, have been one of Kapp's chief sources for the illuminating material which he has presented. Psychoanalysis reads these, too, as genuine documents of the inner life, even when they have been subjected to the

alteration which conscious considerations inevitably force upon unconscious expression. Sometimes this elaboration on the part of consciousness has been carried further, as in Wagner's autobiography or, in a different way, in his theoretical prose discussions. Yet here also psychoanalysis reads between the lines the more intuitive significance of these utterances. These meanings Wagner himself was quick to acknowledge as lying behind the intellectual thought of man. Most of all, however, psychoanalysis finds the deeper lessons of human life where the artist himself felt them to be, in his works of art. Here the human story, though set forth in the well constructed form of external art, pours forth with all the warmth of the artist's own psychic nature. Wagner's life was one of victories and defeats within and without, but it was a life rich in those elements of conflict which constitute the history, though not always in so turbulent a manner, of every individual. Wagner spoke in music and poetry, as he acknowledged, for the unconscious of all men and women.

Psychoanalysis has already followed along this way into the more profound meaning of Wagner's life and art. The first impulse to such an investigation on the part of the present writer arose a number of years ago through the reading of *Die Drei Stufen der Erotik*, by Emil Lucka, the work of an author whose thought touches upon Wagner's deeper conflicts. The continued interest resulting in this study of Wagner's life and work owes its stimulus and guidance in no small part to the studies of Rank, Graf and Mensendieck in this field, as well as to these and other students in the wider field of psychoanalytic interpretation of literature. Some reference to such individual works will be found in the appended bibliography. Personal experience with psychoanalysis serves forcibly to confirm its value as an aid to the understanding of the material of literature and art. Experience reveals ever more convincingly that the artist's life and his creations, the daily life of every individual, including his secret difficulties, the beliefs and the customs of any age or clime, all have a common source. Only in investigation of this source may any of these be understood. Each one of these fields of study, therefore, must furnish illumination to any other.

Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, discovered this long ago. He acknowledged that the poetic creator had always known this, or at least intuitively had acted upon such unconscious realization. Freud furnishes one with a comprehensive grasp of the mental life. He has obtained this not alone through his fearless penetration where others had not dared to tread but further through his correlation of

the world wide manifestations of such mental life in whatever form or degree. It is in this psychological field, discovered by Freud and enriched by his own work and that of his followers, that the interest in Wagner's life and works, fostered through the studies in literary history, has taken root. Definite reference has been made to many of Freud's published works and to certain ones of those who have followed him, yet the present study has been conceived and brought to fulfilment as the product of a much wider reading than could be designated here.

The same might be said of the literature concerning Wagner as well as of that from Wagner's own hand. Only a few of the works from the former group can be noted specifically as having contributed definitely to a knowledge of his life and thought. Many which have assisted in forming the background of acquaintance and sympathy must remain unnamed. Wagner's own works, prose, poetry and music, have been absorbed through years of preparation. Everywhere the writer has been impressed with the closeness of the artist's expression, coming largely in intuitive form, to the discoveries of Freud in the region of the unconscious. Wagner's letters, furthermore, of which thousands are extant, are alive with the fire of his personality and full, too, of the weaknesses which marked his character. They bring one indeed into close acquaintance with the inner and outer life of this man of frailty and of strength.

A recent edition of these letters, undertaken by Kapp and Kastner, is making available many that before had remained inaccessible to the general reader. This edition has been consulted, although no specific references to it have been noted. It so happens that most of the published letters which furnish the material directly usable for this study are contained in an older edition issued by Breitkopf and Härtel in 1912. Reference could be made simply, therefore, with few exceptions, to the letters as they are found in this edition, by the use merely of the abbreviation Br. (Briefe), followed by the number of the volume and of the page, with some notice, when important, in the text or in the footnote as to the occasion or the recipient of the letter. Similar abbreviations have been employed in the references to Wagner's theoretical works. The text used is that of Richard Wagner's *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Volks-Ausgabe, Sechste Auflage, Breitkopf und Härtel, C. F. W. Siegel (R. Linnemann), Leipzig (1912). References give volume and number of page, with the abbreviation of the name of the article as designated in the list of abbreviations, page vi. Quotations from the dramatic text have been

introduced in profusion, usually in direct translation, sometimes in paraphrase, and after each of these the volume and page have been given in parenthesis with the initial letter of the title of the particular one of the Ring dramas from which the passage is taken. Any reference to others of the music dramas has been followed by the full title. Wagner's autobiography has been mentioned in the notes merely as *Mein Leben* without prefixing the author's name.

The difficulties of translation can be appreciated readily by all familiar with the poetry of the *Ring*. Its lyric form, its special adherence to the alliterative verse of the older Germanic poetry and its close union with the music in the author's thought and feeling make it little adaptable to reproduction for prose discussion in another tongue. Yet the thought which it contains has had to be woven into this discussion expressed in our own language. An effort has been made, therefore, to give as literal a translation as possible, so that, as far as may be, we may keep ourselves close to the thought as it flows from the poet's pen. The result is something which is neither altogether prose nor poetry. For more often than not Wagner's phraseology as well as his thought has suggested a literalness of form as of word that has carried the translator, in spite of herself, into semi-metrical lines. For this the reader's indulgence must be asked. A few passages of especial beauty and psychological significance have been given in the original as well as in translation. Entire consistency in the matter of proper names has not been possible. Certain words entirely German in their connotation, or at least with only a borrowed significance in English, have been left in their German form, for example, the spelling and the plural of such words as Walküre (Walküren).

One cannot, one must not conceive of Wagner's poetry without the music that surrounds and overflows it. Yet discussion of the music has been omitted. Analysis of this rich field of unconscious expression lies quite beyond the present writer's capacity. Such a discussion, furthermore, would constitute a sufficient topic in itself. Yet it is hoped that the reader will bear the scores of these music dramas constantly in mind. They form another mode of revelation of the psychic facts which this study finds revealed in scarcely less abundant manner in the poetry itself. For the deeper investigation of the poetry, which psychoanalysis affords, carries us into that inner realm of the psychic life where both poetry and music have their roots and out of which both convey the same profound message. The text of this group of music dramas, *The Ring of the*

Nibelung, is criticised often as confused and uninspiring in thought and as dependent upon the music alone for its artistic beauty and value. A deeper penetration of its poetry, in the light of unconscious factors, proves this to be untrue.

The dramas, in their text, are like some rugged ancient pile constructed by a master hand out of stones which are unfinished and not always set with a perfection of adjustment. Over this pile the same master hand has trained a vine of richest beauty of foliage. It is a foliage that dips deep and somber in the shadowy places and rises above the heights with all the brilliant loveliness of autumn's richest hues. All this luxury of growth owes its origin and its vitality to the same secret forces which once cast up the rough stones that form the structure over which the vital beauty now plays. Such is the relation of the ruggedness of Wagner's dramas to the music in which they are clothed. Both have their origin deep within the psychic nature of man and the recognition and examination of one of these products is only the tacit acknowledgment of the significance of the other. The temptation has arisen frequently to turn to the revelations with which the music surrounds certain passages and adds significance to the poet's message. This has been resisted, however, save in a few passages where a brief reference to the musical setting was unavoidable.

No mention has been made of Wagner's external sources except for a few illustrative parallels in the footnotes. It is not intended to overlook the fact that motives and situations were taken from older forms of human poetic creation. It is assumed, however, that the study of the material as it comes from Wagner's hand is the study also of the same psychic material which found a mode of expression only slightly different at other times. Each artist adapts such material in its outward form to his own particular age but its deeper inner significance remains unchanged. "The incomparable thing concerning the myth", Wagner says, in speaking of Greek writers of tragedy, "is that it is true at every period, and its content, most condensed and compact, is inexhaustible for all time. The task of the poet was only to interpret it."¹ Such material, however, could not pass through the crucible of Wagner's own inner life without the intensification of its passionate human power, and thus it comes to us as Wagner's own.

It may be well briefly to indicate the lines which this study has

¹ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 64.

followed. It has been limited to one work only, the Ring dramas. Here again one theme has been chosen, through which the nature of the unconscious life might be found revealed. This theme is the representation of woman's development through the conflicts which are present in the psychic life. This could not be treated alone without constant reference to the other phase of life with which this must be in association, that of man's development. Thus we are brought to the entire drama of life, as Wagner has presented it.

It has been necessary first to point out the common ground where Wagner's intuition and psychoanalysis find meeting. This has necessitated some exposition of the discoveries of psychoanalysis among the hidden facts of human lives before applying these discoveries to the investigation of the poet's material. Psychoanalysis arose as the result of the investigation of a physician, Sigmund Freud, into mental disturbances. He was at work upon definite medical problems. Yet the more he explored the facts of the mental life, the more did it become clear that there are no medical problems, particularly in the mental realm, distinct from the general problems of life. There are varying degrees of control of the unconscious by consciousness and varying methods by which the unconscious impulses evade this controlling power and escape into action. These forms of escape may interfere with an individual's adjustment to the world about him or so seriously impair his capacity for ordinary action that they are counted as symptoms of disease. In milder forms they may constitute only peculiarities of conduct or of disposition. They may pass off in some well concealed symbolic disguise. Or again, and this is true of Wagner's life, they may find access to the outer world not alone in signs of unrest of mind and of body but also in a marvelous power of artistic creation. This force owes its measure in part to the amount of repression which consciousness has had to exert in order to prevent its appearance in a less noble form.

Wagner's life, like his artistic products, reveals the action of impulses which constitute the greater part of the psychic life of man and out of which both its difficulties and its creative values arise. These impulses are common to all. It is only in the form and the extent of their appearance before consciousness that they differ. It is by his impulses that man lives. Yet these are not always in accord with the form of life which consciousness at the surface must choose. The impulses, the instincts out of which they arise, are not the products of to-day nor of yesterday. They have their origin in a long buried past. They have enjoyed exercise through ages of cul-

ture far remote from the requirements of the present time. They begin their work in each individual in the days of infancy, when adult standards of thought and conduct have not yet exerted their restraining influence. This primitive and infantile past is ineradicable and moreover always dynamic. In Bergson's picturesque words, "Our past . . . as a whole, is made manifest to us in its impulse". "In its entirety, probably, it follows us at every instant; all that we have felt, thought and willed from our earliest infancy is there, leaning over the present which is about to join it, pressing against the portals of consciousness that would fain leave it outside."²

Behind the repression, which consciousness utilizes in order to keep this material outside, lurk the forbidden primitive and infantile forms of desire. These are rich in a dynamic power, which is restrained from taking its place in the full and effective expression of the personality in its relation to the world. Whether the forces escape in a disturbing form or whether they remain confined, so long as they are not admitted to full conscious coöperation they occasion discord in the personality. The poet's representation of such discord produces two results. It brings a direct relief through the dramatization of the discord and of the desires behind it and also aids in attaining a solution of the conflict which is more difficult to attain in the daily round of reality alone.

Psychoanalysis finds that the conflict with its results occurs in very concrete form in individual lives. Thus the poet presents it. This concrete problem may be approached from different angles but it is always the same problem. First it may be stated as the conflict between the two fundamental instinctive trends of the personality. Human life, like every other form of life, tends to nourish and maintain itself or it tends to reproduce itself. This is the sum of life's activity, whether we see it in simple biological form or in the mental life, which ranges from the most limited organic desire to the highest reaches of which aspiration is capable. The range of man's psychic nature then is the accumulated experience of pleasure and pain, passing over into further desire, which attends these two instinctive trends. Yet these trends are antagonistic, for one turns to the service of the ego, the other to the surrender of the ego in the service of reproduction. The interests of the ego, representing separate avenues of satisfaction, not only prevent the synthesis of the personality in the reproductive development but they bring

² H. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, New York, 1913, p. 5.

about a confusion in regard to the transference of love over upon the reproductive object.

Wagner and Freud agree, as we shall find, that all love is sexual in nature and that sexual love is natural, therefore, even to the child. This love, existing then in the earliest years, may suffer permanent withdrawal from the reproductive path to serve the separate ends of the ego. The objects of love are first the parents, but the love toward them in infancy is largely of the ego-serving sort in which its pleasurable quality is directed toward the separate pathways which gratify the ego interests. There is danger, therefore, that interest will always remain split into such separate forms to continue as the more passive, receptive love of childhood, bound unconsciously with the parent as the first love object. The child who is passing to womanhood may be tempted in her unconscious nature to find satisfaction only at these lower personal gratification levels, which engaged the love in infancy. This is a satisfaction to which the parent also may be bound through the unconscious infantilism retained within him. This unconscious desire of parent or of child seeks the increase of the pleasure and sense of power that belong to the ego alone. Such a fixation of interest will be found to be symbolized in the gold, the ring which can heap up measureless wealth and power but which can create no new realities. Around such a symbol will be found to center the widespread conflict of the child who attempts to win the freedom of independent existence and opportunity for adult love. The child growing toward adulthood, represented in the *Ring* through woman in many forms and under various situations, is hindered not alone by her unconscious desires but by the counterpart to these desires hidden in the unconscious life of the powerful father. We shall find that it is this human conflict, repeated in every life, which the poet, however unknown to himself, has traced in these dramas. He represents here the various phases in which the reproductive instinct wins its way, sometimes losing, sometimes defeated, but in the dramas before us finally triumphant, though through bitter sorrow, the effect of the "curse of the gold".

Does it seem fanciful to read such an elemental life story in these elaborated dramas? Let us believe with their author that he has spoken out of the unconscious of the folk. There the life drama is composed of simple elements, ever recurring. For the buried content of the unconscious does not change. Its impulses remain the same however many the layers of culture imposed upon them. Let us accept, too, the challenge with which the poet calls upon the intellectual

thought of the world: "Marvel, ye overtimid critics, at the all-power of the poetic gift of mankind as it is manifest in the myth of the folk! Things which ye can never grasp with your understanding are represented in it with a certainty only thus made possible, clearly comprehensible to feeling, complete to the senses."³

One pleasant task remains, the acknowledgment of the author's indebtedness to those who have followed this work with kindly encouragement and aid. This acknowledgment is extended to the members of the Department of Germanic Languages of Columbia University, among whom special thanks are due to Professor Robert Herndon Fife and Professor Arthur F. J. Remy. The former has given to the preparation of this study the unfailing help of a careful and constructive criticism, while much of the stimulus to the inception and the completion of the written work has arisen from the broad sympathy with which he has followed its course. A similar tribute may be paid to Professor Remy with a special acknowledgment of the incentive derived from his inspiring lectures upon Richard Wagner. The study in large part owes its origin to these. Stimulus and guidance in the psychoanalytic background of the work have come to the writer through association with Dr. Smith Ely Jelliffe and his interest in the extension of psychoanalysis into all fields of cultural activities. Sincere thanks are extended also for the kindness of Mr. Carl Woess, who has read the manuscript and offered valuable criticism from the musician's point of view, and to Dr. Elizabeth C. Jagle for her sympathetic interest and her aid in the reading of the manuscript. The task of reading the proof has been shared by Professor Fife, Professor Remy and Mr. Woess.

LOUISE BRINK

New York, April 1924.

³ IV, "Mittl.", p. 290.

PART I

THE PSYCHIC PROBLEM

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM STATED BY THE POET AND BY PSYCHOANALYSIS

In art the unconscious life of the folk attains to consciousness.¹ This was a controlling idea in Richard Wagner's theory of art. Modern psychology recognizes the unconscious as the hidden source of artistic products. It believes that the artistic creator is compelled by the pressure of unmeasured material which is seeking utterance and which belongs to the vaster region of the psychic life that lies below consciousness. Wagner brooded over the deeper significance of his work, although he did not bring this necessarily to clear definition. He styles himself the "thinking poet" to whom "the unconscious in the nature of things has become conscious".² Not that he has fathomed its content. He confesses, in writing of his *Ring of the Nibelung*, that the artist "himself stands before a work of art, if it really is a work of art, as before a riddle, concerning which he may fall into the same errors as another".³ Poems, he says, "have their ground and necessity in themselves, in the poet's life and his intuitions," and "those things which are most ours are not the intellectual ideas but the intuitions".⁴

There is a profound character to this work, the *Ring of the Nibelung*. Wagner himself has defined certain purposes which his conscious thought formed for the dramas while touching also upon the deeper significance to be found in them.⁵ His followers, in thoughtful study of his works, have found these dramas reservoirs of philosophi-

¹ III, "K.d.Zkft.", pp. 52-55, 103 et al. See H. von Wolzogen, "Aus Richard Wagners Nachlass," *Bayreuther Blätter*, Vol. VIII, 1885, pp. 264, 265, where this idea is summarized.

² IV, "O.u.D.", p. 205.

³ *Br.* XI, p. 65. The letters in *Br.* XI, were written to August Röckel, most of them during the years 1851-1856. Wagner wrote to this friend, then a political prisoner, to explain the new work, the *Ring*, which Wagner had sent him.

⁴ *Br.* XVII, p. 138.

⁵ See *Br.* XI, pp. 7, 8, 30 ff.

cal, religious, sociopolitical ideals, although there has been exaggeration in this mode of interpretation. Undeniable truths stand forth from the surface of the work, testimonials to the unceasing movement of human forces that have found expression here. The dramas obviously tell the story of self-seeking, greed for power in conflict with self-consecrating love. They represent the individual loss of freedom in which this universal conflict involves the innocent and the guilty alike. They represent the attainment of ideals toward which humanity gropes; they picture the sadder lessons of failure into which human conflict passes.

Yet they are not perfect as drama. Taken at their face value both characters and situations put a strain upon our credulity. They present apparent confusion and often, at first sight, offend the sense of fitness of things. Deeper investigation, however, sets them in a different light. They not only form a substructure for a musical development which speaks a language of the inner meaning of life, but this meaning belongs not to the music alone. It is present also in the dramatic foundation upon which this music has form. It is the threefold form into which the artist has cast his work, poetry, music and "moving drama",⁶ which maintains the vital quality of the forces from which the artistic product has arisen. It is this which permits repeated entrance into the actual movement of the psychic forces beneath from which the outstanding expression has arisen. The ever renewed appeal of these music dramas and their abiding hold upon the admirers of Wagner's art are grounded within something deeper than surface truths. They suggest a profounder significance compounded of the most individual elements which constitute the unconscious life of the folk. The poet's intuition, far more discerning than his labored intellectual thought, has created them out of that inner realm of the psychic life which a psychology of the unconscious seeks to penetrate.

Psychological research is no longer content with outstanding facts nor even with partial investigations which go slightly beneath the surface of conscious thought. More than ever before it comprehends its field as that of the entire psyche. Its investigations are being carried into the most hidden recesses of the unconscious mental life. It seeks to enter the secrets of this life in the individual and it finds them no less in the literary and artistic products which have arisen. These, it believes, as they represent the "poet's life and his

⁶ IX, "Bth.", p. 112.

intuitions", make him the revealer of the same hidden elements common to all the folk.

Moreover, psychology, observing life in its actual individual forms or in created phantasy, must consider it in its fluid and dynamic nature. Man's psychic life, the life of thought and feeling, apparently is one of ceaseless movement. In this psychology adopts the poet's point of view. Feeling can be united with full consciousness of reality, Wagner says, only when "the nature of reality is recognized in endless multiplicity. . . . Only that which has change is actual; to be real, to live—means to be pro-created, to grow, to bloom, wither and die. . . . Our whole life is a continuous repetition of the multiplicity of the individual elements of the moments of life—and this repetition alone makes possible the character of this love according to which it resembles the ebb and flood, changes, ends and lives again."⁷ Wagner sees life's dynamic nature to be stronger than the knowledge that would control this, ". . . we, even with our knowledge, are will and only will and as such the most powerful but by no means the wisest of beings".⁸ Life is also genetic, developing in successive phases. The mental life works in an intricate but unbroken pattern. Observed action, final result, appearing to conscious view, are but the end products of long chains of causes with their effects.

Wagner might have defined the inner movement to which he gave artistic expression as he has spoken of the material of music and poetry in his theory of art, the "unconscious in the nature of things, which has become conscious to me". "I have comprehended according to its connection that which formerly artists held as separated. I have not invented anything new as regards it but only found that connection."⁹ Dramatic scenes are the attempt to hold in momentary crystallization the movement of the inner psychic events. The words of the poet give these voice and still more the musician's forms of expression permit the freer outflow of this material. Through the music particularly much that is "inexpressible only to the organ of our understanding" finds the relief of expression.¹⁰ Yet even in the poetic material much is found that at first escapes the eye of the understanding.

Psychoanalysis is a form of psychological inquiry into this inner

⁷ *Br.* XI, pp. 26-29.

⁸ *Br.* XI, p. 72.

⁹ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 205.

¹⁰ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 174.

nature of the psychic life. Its beginning in the field of mental therapy has brought it to a sharp realization of the universal need of a clearer comprehension of the hidden facts of the mental life. Many persons are seriously ill mentally because these hidden elements have overwhelmed the conscious life. Others suffer through them only partial disturbance in their adjustment to life. No one possesses full understanding of the inner forces and therefore these too blindly control disposition and conduct. Consciousness is discovered to be only a very small fraction of the entire mental life. It is indispensable as the guiding agency for the dynamic power which constitutes the deeper nature yet its function is but poorly performed because of its ignorance of these deeper elements. The artist is one in whom these inner forces find freer expression in outward forms than with most men, yet, through his art, in a form that is safe and acceptable. Dwelling in readier touch with the hidden part of the psychic nature, he is also more clearly aware that a profound unconscious exists to form the wellspring of art and of the actions of men.

Psychoanalysis has brought to light one important fact in particular in regard to the inner mental life. This is that of the extent of the defensive action of consciousness against the dynamic elements of the unconscious. These elements, in the depths of the unconscious, retain in large measure their primitive forms. The change of these elemental impulses over into socially acceptable forms has not been able to keep pace with external cultural demands. This is true as regards the race as a whole. It is true also in the individual life, where the early infantile ideals, built upon elemental impulses, do not readily conform to the higher social ideals of the personality. Consciousness, therefore, the function of which is to guide the personality in its social relationships, has developed the power of "repression".¹¹ By it the more elementary forms of the mental life are held restrained in the unconscious or, if they reappear, they are forced again into the depths. It may be seen that repression is an invaluable aid to the advance of culture. It should serve for partial restraint of the dynamic material while this is being brought under more direct control. But fear of the powers behind the repression has increased the latter to the extent of banishment from consciousness of much of the personality. Yet these banished forces, dynamic as they are, representing the will stronger than knowledge,

¹¹ S. Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, New York, 1920, pp. 255 ff.

cannot be restrained utterly by this procedure. They return by devious ways and, lacking the control of the consciousness which has banished them, their action, though indirect, is only so much the more baleful. Tragedies greater or smaller arise, disturbances are created with their causes unknown. The sorrows of life, even its joys, remain unexplained. We are slaves to them instead of masters of the powers which they represent and which may be exercised through them.

The artist's message comes in large measure as the result of the repression. "The inner vision of the poet has nothing to do with external events", Wagner is reported to have said, ". . . so that that which one does *not* find in life is represented in the artistic picture".¹² Pressed upon from the deeper springs of thought and emotion, the poet provides, through his artistic forms, special means for the relief of the repressed forces. Through his expression an escape is afforded back into consciousness of much that otherwise strives in vain for healthful outlet. Much of the artist's material, therefore, is originally primitive and infantile in its nature. It represents natural impulse and therefore desire, desire which reality cannot grant. "My art . . . would suddenly lose all its foundation if I might once embrace all the reality of life."¹³ The artist is not the didactic instructor picturing an abstract ideal of life. He is not painting large signboards for the unthinking traveler. His is rather a spontaneous expression of desire itself, of the emotional situation into which desire precipitates itself. Through such expression desire finds its more immediate relief. In Wagner's words, "the drama does not picture human characters but allows them directly to represent themselves. . . ." ¹⁴

Psychoanalysis has made this its method of effective therapy. The patient cannot effectively be given dogmatic instruction as to a better way of life. He is encouraged rather to dramatize his desires that in this way he may give direct, spontaneous expression to the buried impulses. This is done chiefly through the dream. The artist is only the more finished dreamer. He is one, as Freud says, who "understands how to elaborate his day dreams so that they lose their essentially personal element . . . and yield satisfaction to

¹² C. F. Glasenapp, *Das Leben Richard Wagners*, 6 Bücher, Leipzig, 1905-1911, VI, pp. 144, 145.

¹³ *Br.* XI, p. 19. Apparently the "reality" which Wagner craved was often incompatible with the reality which the world offers.

¹⁴ IX, "Bth.", p. 105.

others as well".¹⁵ Through the dream, personal or artistic, conscious intellect may discover its opportunity for a wiser control. "In the drama", according to Wagner, "we must come to know through feeling".¹⁶

Neither the language of the ordinary dreamer nor that of the poet may be too direct. The repressive attitude of the conscious point of view makes it necessary that a compromise form of expression shall be found. Psychoneurotic symptoms are such compromises between the elements of the unconscious seeking expression and the rigorous censorship of consciousness. The poet and the dreamer have yet another method at their disposal. They utilize, only in more elaborated form, the power of symbolization common to all language, indeed to all forms of human activity. By it something indirect and therefore more permissible is substituted for that which, in direct form, would prove offensive. The symbol also has the power of concentrating into its form more than one element of a desire or of an object to be sought and, therefore, of providing a larger outlet for the emotion than the direct form of the impulse to action could obtain. The characters themselves in a dramatic representation are symbolic forms. Those symbols in which they speak and the symbolic situations in which they act are indirect modes of gratification by which the artist obtains for himself and others "solace and consolation" from the "unconscious sources of gratification which had become inaccessible".¹⁷

The symbol performs still another service through its concentration and its substitution. It carries the impulse from its more primitive or its too personal form into another sphere of thought and emotion. The symbol is the lever by which the mental life attains higher and freer planes of activity even while the symbol gives concealed expression to the lower elements demanding the more direct relief.¹⁸ Wagner has given voice to a conception of this sort in its special application to Beethoven's highest work, the Ninth Symphony: "What we feel herein is a certain excess, a violent necessity to discharge outwardly, quite comparable to the yearning to

¹⁵ Freud, *ibid.*, p. 327.

¹⁶ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 78.

¹⁷ Freud, *l.c.*

¹⁸ Cf. S. E. Jelliffe, *Technique of Psychoanalysis*, New York and Washington, 1920, pp. 140, 157, for value of symbol in evolution. See also "The Symbol as an Energy Container", *Journal Nervous and Mental Disease*, Vol. L, 1919, pp. 540-550.

awaken from a deeply disquieting dream. And the significant thing for the artistic genius of mankind is that this yearning here has called forth an artistic deed through which a new possibility, the capacity for the creation of the highest artistic work, is brought to this genius."¹⁹

Wagner, in his own artistic products, has resymbolized the unconscious forces with their desires for an age which strives, in some measure at least, to gather its more primitive impulses to advancing cultural standards. The Brynhild of Icelandic legend, in part the forerunner of Wagner's Brünnhilde, puts no bridle upon the murderous impulses with which she avenges the insult to her pride when she finds herself trapped into union with an inferior lover. She not only brings about the death of Sigurd, the hero, but she exults over her rival's sorrow. Her laughter, with which the castle halls resound, and her wild weeping, through which the concealed love for the dead hero betrays itself, express only her personal feeling, solely self-directed.²⁰ In Wagner's Brünnhilde the conflict between love and hate permits no diabolic triumph nor excess of self-pity. The sharpness of the strife, even though for a time hate wins the mastery, finds a higher solution for the bitter discord of desires, one which serves others than merely Brünnhilde herself. Kriemhild too, of the *Nibelungenlied*, also a partial model for Wagner's heroine, becomes after Siegfried's death the incarnation of a murderous vengeance which extends itself into an endless succession of bloody deeds. Wagner's drama permits no such brutal revel of imagination. Nor does he admit to his simplified tale of Tristan and Isolde the elaboration of base intrigue and forbidden indulgence with which this legend had been decked out in its oft repeated telling.²¹

Thus he has taken the mythology of a cruder period when love and hatred claimed the right of more directly ruthless action. He has winnowed the elaborations of medieval tradition which had given many sided indulgence to the primitive emotions. In Wagner's hands all becomes again a useful expression of fundamental forces, even while his symbols bring them to higher cultural service. The unconscious conflicts have been able to take on new forms of ex-

¹⁹ IX, "Bth.", p. 111.

²⁰ *Die Lieder der älteren Edda*, hrsg. v. Hildebrand-Gering, 3te Aufl., Paderborn, 1912, "Brot af Sigurbarkvibu", p. 334; "Sigurbarkiviða en Skamma", p. 352; *The Poetic Edda*, trans. from the Icelandic by H. A. Bellows, 2 vols. in one, New York, London, 1923, pp. 407, 408, 429.

²¹ See Wolfgang Golther, *Tristan und Isolde in den Dichtungen des Mittelalters und der neuen Zeit*, Leipzig, 1907, passim.

pression which bring them to more exalted goals. The primitive sources of impulse are being buried continually, in the ceaseless "piling up of the past upon the past", beneath new layers of the unconscious life.²² Yet this only creates for these fundamental forces fresh demand for their expression. This the genius of Wagner has given them.²³

It is also to the more personal elements of desire that he has given such expression. Here in the *Ring of the Nibelung* Wagner's inner thought has created a richly varied symbolism, which has become often the only slightly concealed language of the most concrete forms of individual desire. The particular forms in which love and hate secure exercise, even the physical forms of love's gratification, find freer expression in poetry than in ordinary speech. These elements obtain, furthermore, a much fuller release from the taboos which even here hold them in restraint since poetry makes abundant use of the symbols in which language gradually has clothed these elements. Through such symbols much that corresponds to the unconsciously acknowledged desires passes the guarded gate of consciousness.²⁴ Such symbols not only flow freely from Wagner's hand but he uses them with a vividness through which, while they stimulate the higher esthetic interest, they also make a close approach to the concrete form of the desire for which they stand. And so they serve the double purpose, that of culture and that of more direct affective relief. Thus Siegfried's rising physical passion, impatient for possession of Brünnhilde, is scarcely concealed by the symbol borrowed from her protecting flames, "A rending fire is kindled in me; the glow which burned round Brünnhilde's rock is burning now in my frame. Thou woman, extinguish this brand, still thou this seething flame!" (VI, 170 S). And Brünnhilde's outcry, as she recalls the significance of the cutting of her armor, contains the almost literal speech of a maiden's protest against invasion of her body, "He who awoke me has wounded me! He broke for me byrnie and helm. Brünnhilde am I no more!" (VI, 171 S).

But desire is not confined to these more obviously accepted interests of the personality. As already seen, it contains lingering

²² Bergson, l.c.

²³ See Max Schlesinger, *Geschichte des Symbols*, Berlin, 1912, p. 431, ". . . in order to employ symbols consciously and to give them life there is need of the genius of a Dante or of a Richard Wagner".

²⁴ See E. Jones, *Papers on Psycho-analysis*, New York, 1923, Chap. VII, "The Theory of Symbolism".

traces of the racial past and of the elementary experiences of each new individual. These, too, must find symbolism through which they may obtain otherwise denied gratification and at the same time be lifted to the higher levels. It was hard apparently for Wagner himself to relinquish earlier sources of satisfaction which had marked his childhood experience and formed his childish delight. His autobiography and his letters support the testimony of his biographer Glasenapp as to the affection of mother and sisters which surrounded his early years.²⁵ His was a childhood filled with lively experiences of a pleasurable and sometimes a painful type, and marked also by more serious events suitable to produce lasting impressions upon the child mind. He himself tells us of the mysterious terrors and the strange sensations of pleasure which wrought themselves within his experiences at this early period.²⁶ His letters and his dramatic works are full of the signs of an unending strife between the desire for undisturbed satisfaction of inner longings and the determination of a spirit to wrest its own independence from such tempting inaction. A key to the tumults which filled his life is to be found in the letter written to his mother from Carlsbad early in his artistic career. He rejoices that already he has been forced to the knowledge "that I have nothing to expect from any one in the world but I am driven back entirely upon myself. Now for the first time I feel myself independent." And yet, in this same letter in which he asserts his independence in the external world, he writes, "Thou—thy heart—thy love be my only retreat, in which, in all the sorrows of my life to come, I will seek consolation and hope".²⁷

Childish joys, even the painful experiences which belong to the earlier years of life, because of their associations, are more fixedly imbedded in individual lives than consciousness has acknowledged. Psychoanalytic research finds it to be so. It recognizes, too, that although the artist may have freer access to the things buried within the unconscious, yet his cravings are simply those of all men. While they often cause disaster in the artist's life because they more freely attain to external action, yet, on the other hand, his closeness of touch with them makes them available for his creative work. It is probable that a greater intensity of these desires in their elemental form actually is a driving factor toward his greater artistic expression of

²⁵ F. Glasenapp, *ibid.*, I, Chaps. III, IV; Wagner, *Mein Leben*, 2 vols., München, 1911, I, pp. 1-21, 47, 48, 87, 88.

²⁶ *Mein Leben*, Vol. I, pp. 1-21, 47, 48, 87, 88.

²⁷ *Br.* III, p. 17 (July 25, 1835).

them. For apparently, as Freud says, artistic constitutions "are strongly endowed with an ability to sublimate and to shift the suppressions determining their conflicts. The artist finds the way back to reality in this way . . . he understands how to elaborate his day dreams . . . He also knows how to disguise them so that they do not easily disclose their origin in the despised sources."²⁸ And so again the artist's forms are the means of elevation of the impulses from the inner sources to the planes of sublimated achievement.²⁹

Shall we find then in the *Ring of the Nibelung* revelations of this life which has been concealed below the level of consciousness? Can it be that the artist's message owes its enduring power to the fact that it arises out of such fundamental elements in the unconscious life of the folk? "Who are the folk? . . . The folk was always the concept of all the individuals who constitute a community."³⁰ Psychoanalysis has been compelled to study life as it is manifest in the individual. Only thus have the larger tragedies and joys also been understood. The artist in his created forms is also concrete, individual. The sensuous qualities of his speech and tonal harmonies belong to the concrete, individual language of the unconscious. "My poem . . . reveals nature in her undistorted truth with all her contradictions which, in their endless multiplicity of events, comprise even that which is mutually repellent."³¹

The artist has always preceded the intellectual investigator. The intuition that creates a work which astounds its creator testifies to this. Wagner the thinker was always outdistanced by Wagner the artist. Art pours out in an overflowing stream, a stream so deep in its sources that intellect in order to discover them must look painstakingly within. "Poetry", Wagner says, "represents the elements working together in a whole; science, in order to understand them, must set them apart."³² Yet both have the same purpose, which Wagner himself has stated. He declared of the poetry to which he gave allegiance that it sought to discern life, longing to comprehend

²⁸ Freud, l.c.

²⁹ See O. Rank, *Das Inzest-motiv in Dichtung und Sage*, Leipzig und Wien, 1912, pp. 5 ff., for reference to writers who have discussed the inner source of the artistic product and the nature of the inner material. Rank deepens and extends this theme in his penetrating and comprehensive psychoanalytic work.

³⁰ III, "K.d.Zkft.", p. 47.

³¹ *Br.* XI, 35.

³² IV, "O.u.D.", p. 34.

its higher relationships and search the very grounds of its being. It was the poetic art which is "science, philosophy". He knew intuitively that the fulfilment of science is its "redemption" in poetry and the sister arts. "The deepest and most universal science can know nothing else than life itself and the content of life is none other than man and nature."³³ The knowledge of man's inner life, Wagner says, is the final goal toward which knowledge of external nature tends.³⁴ Here lies the need of the individual and the possibility of his best relation to the social world. The necessity in the actions of men is sought "in the depths. . . . Out of the need of the individual to unite himself with the nature of his race arises the whole movement of history. The phenomena of history are the manifestations of the inner movement, the inner kernel of which is the social nature of man. The nourishing power of this nature, however, is the individual, who only in the satisfaction of his involuntary longing for love can still his impulse for happiness."³⁵

Psychoanalysis has been led to define the psychic life in such fundamental terms, only more sharply in outline. Comprehending life distinctly in its dynamic nature, it views it psychologically as well as in its physical organism as the movement of energy. Both mind and body in their interaction express this energy in the form of desire. This in turn is an expression of organic need, necessity. "Nature", so says Wagner, "engenders and forms purposelessly and involuntarily according to need, therefore from necessity; the same necessity is the creative and formative power of human life . . . only in need lies the ground of life".³⁶ This need, even as it appears in the form of desire, falls, according to psychoanalysis, into two instinctive forms. In one of these energy, in the form of organic need and psychic desire, is directed toward the more immediate welfare of the ego. Here are found the ego instincts, those which pertain to self-preservation, nutrition, self-service. The other form of instinct is that through which the individual, to take our language from the poet, goes out beyond himself "to unite with the nature of his race". This latter constitutes the reproductive instinct in its fullest sense. Its root, however, exists in the simple sexual union of life's forms. This is developed in its deepest intensity in man, where the reproductive activity, the desire to unite with the nature of

³³ III, "K.d.Zkft.", pp. 107, 108.

³⁴ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 42.

³⁵ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 50.

³⁶ III, "K.d.Zkft.", p. 42.

the race, is manifest chiefly in the sexual love life. "Sexuality", according to Freud, "is the only function of the living organism which extends beyond the individual and sees to his kinship with the species".³⁷ Again it is the poet who supports this view: "The richest reproductive power [Zeugungskraft] . . . has called into being the male and the female, the eternally self-renewing and creating, the eternally self-fulfilling, self-satisfying—and in this unending connection has it now become established, unconditionally itself."³⁸ "We find the highest satisfaction of egoism only in this most complete opening up of the self, and this man finds only through love."³⁹

It is in the love life, therefore, that desire is in evidence, where, in the form of "necessity", the personality is torn by conflicting aims. Here are revealed the sharpest conflicts between the needs of the ego and the craving of the energy to go beyond the self. The ego demands fulfilment of the immediate need and would rest there in the mere repetition of once attained satisfaction of its desires. The reproductive side of the personality finds its gratification only in an ever renewed extension beyond itself, which repeatedly imperils the comfort and even the safety of the ego. The germ of the evil which exists in the ring, according to Wagner, lies in the bondage revealed between Wotan and Fricka, which springs from the "involuntary error of love to prolong itself beyond the inevitable change, to make themselves secure" and which brings them both "to the mutual torture of lovelessness".⁴⁰ But to Siegfried, the "fearless, always loving man" and Brünnhilde, united with whom he becomes the "saviour" of love, the ring is the symbol of that love which accepts even death among the phenomena of change.⁴¹ "Laughing must I love thee . . . laughing let us perish, laughing to destruction

³⁷ Freud, *ibid.*, p. 357.

³⁸ III, "K.d.Zkft.", p. 51.

³⁹ *Br. XI*, p. 27. These utterances of Wagner are among those in which he frequently spoke more profoundly than he knew. In his prose discussions he makes a somewhat special application of his theory concerning egoism in regard to society and to the place of art within society. In view, however, of the intuitive psychology of his poetic works we feel justified in reading from his prose expressions a deeper, more fundamental significance. And this none the less because his own life presented such a striking example of the fierce strife of egoism against the surrender of that egoism in the greater love.

⁴⁰ *Br. XI*, pp. 35–37.

⁴¹ *Br. XI*, pp. 37, 39, 41.

go!" (VI, 175 S). Freud has utilized the term libido for the re-productive instinct in its contrast to the interests of the ego.⁴² The term denotes both the irrestrainable dynamic nature of the instinct and the manifestation of its craving in the various phases of the love desire. Freud associates the term libido with the ego also since not only does the libido have its origin in the ego, but, as we shall see, the libido may be directed toward egoistic goals instead of toward the true object of the libido outside the self.⁴³ The terms in their distinctly contrasting forms, ego interest and libido, are adopted here to serve as the starting point for tracing the conflict of the two tendencies as represented in the Ring dramas.

Wagner's staging of these inner psychic events in the guise of supernatural or subnatural beings dwelling in mythological realms does not remove them from human reality. His own intensity of character pierces always to the core of symbolic forms. Wagner perceives in the myth something through which the mind of man is groping toward a comprehension and control of the phenomena amid which he lives. "The great diversity of the phenomena, the actual connection of which man cannot yet grasp, makes upon him first the impression of unrest. In order to overcome this unrest he seeks for a connection between these phenomena which he may conceive as their cause."⁴⁴ It is only reason in the end that will find such cause, Wagner goes on to say, but phantasy is at work in poetic imagination upon its discovery or invention. "All the creative impulse of the folk is directed, in the myth, to the representation of the widest connection of the most manifold phenomena in the most concentrated form."⁴⁵ Thus, Wagner continues, the superhuman and supernatural forms of the myth are created but these are actually human and natural in character. They appear superhuman and supernatural

⁴² Freud, *ibid.*, pp. 356, 357.

⁴³ See Freud, *ibid.*, p. 359; *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, New York, 1918, pp. 77, 78. A very recent work of Freud, *Das Ich und das Es*, Leipzig, Wien, Zürich, 1923, assigns a more specialized position to the ego in the personality. It also develops the conception of a more fundamental division of the instincts into life and death instincts, a division which Freud had already considered in his work, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, London, Vienna, 1922, pp. 41 ff. The fact that the Ring dramas might be considered from these points of view does not invalidate the study of them as representative of the instinctive tendencies in conflict as we have followed them here.

⁴⁴ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 31.

⁴⁵ "O.u.D.", pp. 31, 32.

that the power and capacity which they contain, belonging to many men and common to nature, "may be ascribed to the imagined form of a single humanly represented individual".⁴⁶ "Art in its significance is nothing else than the fulfilment of the longing to recognize oneself in an admired or loved object represented, to find oneself again in the phenomena of the external world which have been submitted to representation. The artist says to himself in the object represented by himself, 'Thus thou art, thus thou feelest and thinkest and so wouldst thou act if, free from the compelling will of external impressions of life, thou couldst act according to the choice of thine own wish!' So the folk represent to themselves in the myth first the god, then the hero and then, finally, man."⁴⁷ Thus Wagner sees human life as the fundamental thing represented, even though he is aware also of the possibility of reading into the myths the reflection of the processes of external nature. Siegfried to him is first the man, only secondarily the symbol of creative power abroad in the universe.⁴⁸

Wagner recognized also in his Nibelung poem a difference between a conception in such a work of art of the ideal order of things as the intellect would have them and the intuitive representation of the essence of things as they are, "a sincere acknowledgment of the true, profound order of things, without being in the least influenced by a definite purpose".⁴⁹ He discovered that he had given expression in his work to the intuitive perception when consciously he had intended to express his intellectual conception. Thus, we believe, the folk in their myths unconsciously set forth life truly as it is in its deeper nature, even while seeking to express the external conception of things. And psychoanalysis, looking into the individual life, discovers there, too, the same contradiction. The striving after an ideal order of existence is involved in a "profound order of things", that intricate pattern of cause and effect which hampers and, at least for the time, defeats the attainment of the ideal phase. "I scarcely noticed", Wagner writes, "while occupied with the execution, indeed with the delineation of my plan, that unconsciously I had followed quite another, much deeper intuition and, instead of a phase of the evolution of the world, I had seen and acknowledged the essence of the world itself in all its merely conceivable phases, with all its unreality, whereby, naturally, as I remained true to my

⁴⁶ "O.u.D.", p. 32.

⁴⁷ "O.u.D.", pp. 32, 33.

⁴⁸ *Br.* XI, pp. 36-39; IV, "Mttl.", p. 328.

⁴⁹ *Br.* XI, p. 67.

intuitions but not to my conceptions, something quite different came to light from what I had planned".⁵⁰

It is, therefore, in order to look more deeply into this essence of the world in the nature of man, of the psychic life as the poet and musician has abstracted it from the myth, that we apply to his work the methods of an individualistic psychology. Psychoanalysis has no desire to force an interpretation into Wagner's works. It has no need to displace any explanation of them that has been made. Such interpretations, whether from Wagner's own hand, or from those who have thoughtfully followed his work, have opened the way for still further investigation.

Yet psychoanalysis has obtained in its own way definite knowledge of the psychic life and of the mechanisms by which the hidden forces act. It has learned enough of the content of individual minds to believe that the nature of the unconscious is indeed universal, the unconscious of the folk. It believes that the artist has a peculiar freedom of expression for that psychic material which lies in the depths outside the range of his clear conscious knowledge. It accepts his revelations, unconscious though they may be, a riddle to himself, as material in which investigation may still proceed. Seeking, like the poet, to know more of life, it turns its research upon his revelations of that life. It claims the privilege of applying here as tools its own discoveries in the realm of individual psychology and the hypotheses which it has formed tentatively for its own use. The treasures of the artist's creation remain undimmed whoever inspects them reverently for his own knowledge of life. The application of any keys which have unlocked the secrets of individual lives should discover in the artist's work psychic facts of the same value to enrich our knowledge of the inner life of man. If in turn the poet's treasures shall be illumined in any manner, they will become of greater value in the realms of esthetic and intellectual appreciation. For again the goal of science and of art is "none other than life itself".

⁵⁰ *Br.* XI, pp. 67, 68. Cf. Bergson, *ibid.*, pp. 165, 176, "*The intellect is characterized by a natural inability to comprehend life. . . . But it is to the very inwardness of life that intuition leads us . . .*"

CHAPTER II

THE INFANTILE BASIS OF CHARACTER

The study of life individually in these dramas is not the following separately of each character portrayed. The poet is not writing the story of various personalities who pass over his pages but is revealing rather the development of character. The variety, likewise, of his musical themes does not represent so many distinct emotional situations. The continuous interweaving of musical phrases which have a vitally close connection one with another makes of Wagner's tonal background a genetic unity which corresponds with that of life itself. "I have again realized how much . . . will become clear first through the music", he writes on concluding the score of the "Rheingold". ". . . it has become a completely interwoven unity; there is scarcely a bar in the orchestra that is not developed out of preceding motives."¹ "As the drama does not picture human characters, but permits them directly to represent themselves, so music gives us in its motives the character of all the phenomena of the world according to their innermost nature [nach ihrem innersten An-sich]."² The interwoven unity, therefore, of dramatic situations, poetic forms and musical motives must be borne in mind constantly although it is necessary in this study to exclude the musical motives from definite attention. For all this unity serves to represent human life discovering and developing itself amid the phenomena of its inner psychic elements and of the external world.

This unity, nevertheless, as has been seen, is split into many forms or motives. The poet's work, as Wagner has stated it, is to bring together the motives of life out of their isolation into a strengthened whole. Distracted in time and space, as he says, "man cannot understand his own life's activity; the picture of this activity, however, concentrated for the understanding, becomes visible in the form created by the poet, in which the action is concentrated to a most intensive moment". In all the pattern of life, which has to be presented externally to conform to the actual appearance of life, he shows, the poet, therefore, has an inner unifying form which draws all these isolated factors to a centralized meaning. There is a central

¹ *Br.* XI, p. 42.

² *IX.* "Bth.", p. 105.

motive to which the phenomena are adhered, which is the chief action enlarged and strengthened.³

Analysis of the individual discovers that the dreamer maintains such a unity. He is representing in his dreams an individual life, his own. He uses the multitude of his dream forms to strengthen a central idea embodied in himself, that is, to represent his own person and its interests.⁴ The dream is the speech of the unconscious when the personality is retired from necessary action upon the external world and concentrated upon its inmost desires. Character forms may throng the dream in multitudes. Apparently they are only projections of the personal relationships with which the dreamer's inner thought is occupied, however much these personal interests may have borrowed this multiplicity of external phenomena in order to present themselves before the waking consciousness.⁵ Their nucleus is within the dreamer himself. The poet, though he makes the individual dream universal, utilizes the same method. The dramatic centralized theme may be projected into any number of forms to bring it to the conscious attention of the spectator or the listener.⁶ But it, too, is centered in an inner individualistic unity.

Human life is this central theme. The many characters and the many relationships through which they are represented are but the various manifestations of life according to time and space. Yet human life has one cleavage dividing its unity, which determines some difference in life's manifestations. It is divided according to sex and, therefore, must be considered from either of two genetic centers. To be sure, the developmental relationships of members of both sexes are so inevitably interwoven that neither sex can be considered alone. Yet, as we stand at the beginning of life to follow it through its course, we are at the dividing of the way where each pathway leads in its own direction. Our study shall be along the pathway of woman.

The environmental conditions are the same, to a large extent, as regards the child of either sex. The child's distinguishing sex characteristics, however, will present some difference in the reactions

³ IV, "O.u.D.", pp. 82-85.

⁴ Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, New York, 1913, pp. 299, 300.

⁵ Cf. Freud, *ibid.*, p. 114, for the idea of the "manifest and the latent dream content" with Wagner, IX, "Bth.", p. 73, "as the dream of deepest sleep can pass over into waking consciousness only when translated into the language of a second allegorical dream directly before waking . . ."

⁶ Cf. Rank, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, New York, 1912, pp. 83 ff. for multiplication of personages.

of that child to its environment or in the reactions upon it of other persons in the environment. This is not to assume in the child the distinctly sexual character of maturer years. It is only to see, even in the earliest infancy, a sufficient determination toward the divergent path of either sex to inform with its own special nature the experience of childhood. Both physiology and psychology reveal that the division will never be a complete one. Organically and psychically each being to some extent is bisexual. This seems to be of greatest service in human society for the many sexual and social adaptations required in earlier and in later years. At the same time it adds to the difficulties of life throughout the entire period of growth, perhaps causing retardation in social and sexual development. Psychology before Freud's day was peculiarly blind to this far-reaching fact of the bisexuality of individual natures but we shall find that it has not escaped the poet's profounder intuition.

The sexes, nevertheless, even in infancy, remain sufficiently distinct to determine special relationships and to determine special problems in the course of life. The term sex is a necessary one here in order to preserve the double point of view. It must not be forgotten, however, that the problem concerns life in no such narrow aspect as the term might suggest. In reality it is the striving of the reproductive instinct to fulfill itself in every sense in the face of the temptations which the ego interest leaves in its way. The division of life's forms into two sexes to form again a complete union through love is only the special phase of the reproductive. It is true that this exists with an insistent emphasis upon itself yet it returns again as an inspiring force for all other creative activities and thereby doubly justifies its existence. The development of the sex life toward healthy adult maturity is the measurement of the entire social reproductive life. Disturbances in the development of one are paralleled by disturbances in the course of the other. "Sex love is the agitator which breaks through the narrow boundaries of the family in order to extend them to the greater human society."⁷ If these boundaries are not broken through in the form of sex development neither will they be in other respects.

The change which love undergoes at maturity is not a great change in its intrinsic nature. Rather, as the poet suggests, love breaks its old boundaries to extend them. It attaches itself to an object outside itself, an object peculiarly fitted to bring the individual to fullest self-realization; ". . . the male and the female, which.

⁷ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 56.

united through love, are at last the human being".⁸ All the earlier partial elements of the individual interest, which become united through this object, must be detached from the limited goals which engaged them in their separate forms in childhood. For the child's interests are separate, awaiting their synthesis through object love, organically through physical sex maturity, psychically through all that constitutes sex love and that tends to other creative ends.

Psychoanalysis finds it impossible to consider the psychical development of the individual apart from the physiological. All that to which the psychic nature attains or all that which proves a hindrance to the attainment of its higher possibilities is to be understood through the constant interaction of body and mind. The child first has to acquire a knowledge and a valuation of his capacities as an ego in relation to the world about him. He can accomplish this only through the body, the instrument of the mind. To such an end he must exercise all his sensory and motor pathways. He directs his interest through these pathways first to those things that most directly constitute his environment. He tests his own capacity for action upon the environment. These processes necessarily must be carried on at the beginning without discrimination as to relative values. The infant must learn to distinguish between his own body and the objects of the environment, while only experience can bring knowledge of the ego's proper relation to these objects. This experience must build up the sense of relative values. At the beginning the ego loves only itself. Other selves exist only as sources from which to draw satisfaction to itself. Furthermore, every part of the child's nature, physically as well as psychically considered, is greedy for satisfaction in its own right. The first natural reactions of a sensational being are based upon the principle of immediate attainment of pleasure with avoidance of pain. Freud has named this the "pleasure principle" in contrast to the "reality principle".⁹ The discipline of reality brings with it a gradual extension of the ego interests in action toward other personalities and with this a postponement of gratification in the interests of higher goals to which the partial, more immediate aims shall contribute. This lesson of reality is not only difficult in itself but it is opposed, even while it is being learned, by the earlier experiences which maintain in the unconscious the memories of the once obtained partial satisfactions. The full adult acceptance of the "reality principle" demands as its basis the

⁸ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 102.

⁹ Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, p. 5.

synthesis of the personality which brings together its partial aims in a centralizing motive. This is accomplished physiologically through the maturing of the reproductive apparatus, which gives to the personality its definite reproductive capacity and its large pattern of secondary sexual characteristics, so important for character and for all creative function. Yet the psychic interest may be so fixed upon the satisfactions obtained more immediately through the separate somatic pathways already active in infancy and standing in service of the ego in its nonreproductive capacity that the psyche seriously lags behind the organic reproductive development. The psychic personality then prefers the ends which serve only itself, not the race. Psychoanalysis finds such a fundamental pattern at the basis of life's disturbances. It finds it symbolized in the dreams of the individual who is in conflict because of this division of his personality. It believes that the poet's symbols speak also of such a concrete groundwork for the conflict in which his characters are engaged.

Certain areas with their function prove especially dangerous in the development of individual character upon its physical basis because they peculiarly serve the ego interest apart from the service of the ego toward other personalities. If any relation to other personalities exists, it is chiefly in the passive form of receiving attention from these, especially, in the earliest formative years, from the parents.

Savage lore attests such exaggeration of any separate ego pathway.¹⁰ Hair, teeth, nails, all portions or substances of the body destined to share however indirectly in reproductive activities, as well as the excretory properties which are least constructively useful, all are treasured for their separate values and guarded from a loss of that value in contact with others. This savage conception of values, with the curious customs which follow from it, represents a level of thought which lies in the unconscious of the civilized adult of to-day. It still finds more open expression in earliest childhood. Such an estimate of values becomes strongly repressed into the unconscious.

It is the fecal area with its function and product which becomes most intensively a center upon which interest unconsciously is

¹⁰ J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 7 parts, London, 1913, Part II, "Taboo and the Perils of the Soul", pp. 287 ff.; *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, 3 vols., London, 1919, III, p. 264 et al.; G. Rôheim, "Das Selbst", *Imago*, VII, 1921, pp. 33 ff., 134.

fixed.¹¹ In the first place it belongs to the strictly nutritive system through which the ego obtains direct service to itself alone. Then it represents the child's earliest capacity to produce something through its own body but a product useless, incapable of the production of new values, even destructive in its nature. Yet the functional activity not only is accompanied by sensory pleasure but it establishes in the child an entirely self-centered satisfaction in his own power. It becomes, therefore, a fitting basis for the phantasy which later seeks symbolic form. For such an interest, subject to the taboo of society and of the child's own advancing cultural standard, is repressed strongly into the unconscious. Then from the unconscious the repressed conception returns to serve the egotistic desire but now in symbolic disguise. In the dramas before us the symbol is the ring of magic gold.¹² The ring, like the child's own body with as yet no function to carry the interest beyond the self, heaps to itself unchanged increment but it does not pass over into the creation of that which is new. The fecal interest becomes representative fundamentally of all that shuts the ego in its selfish desires away from the demands of the real world outside itself. It denotes the goal of self-seeking and expresses the exercise of sheer self-glorifying power. It stands, therefore, as the opposite to the reproductive interest which pours itself out through union with another.¹³ "Only he who the might of love's passion denies, only he who casts love's delight away, he alone shall obtain the spell that shapes the gold to the ring" (V, 211 R).

Definite traits of character are found through analysis to have their basis in fixation at this low nutritive-waste level.¹⁴ Envy, greed, brutal display of might or arrogant assumption of power, violent rejection of the claims of others, the exercise of hatred as

¹¹ Freud, *Sammlung Kleiner Schriften zur Neurosenlehre*, 2te Folge, Leipzig und Wien, 1909, "Charakter und Analerotik", pp. 132-137.

¹² See Freud, l.c. for gold as fecal symbol, also pp. 144 ff.; Jones, *ibid.*, p. 676; Rudolf Kleinpaul, *Das Stromgebiet der Sprache*, Leipzig, 1892, for gold as symbol of filth and also of sunlight. Cf. Wagner's rich use of the motive of light in the *Ring* in contrast to the evil significance of the gold. See also Schlesinger, *ibid.*, pp. 311, 372; E. Meinck, "Die Lichtidee in Wagners Ringdichtung", *Bayreuther Blätter*, XIV, 1911, pp. 198-210, esp. 209, 210, for double significance of the ring; W. S. Swisher, "The Symbolism of Wagner's 'Rheingold'", *Psychoanalytic Review*, X, 1923, pp. 447-452.

¹³ See Lou Andreas-Salomé, "'Anal' und 'Sexual'", *Imago*, IV, 1916, pp. 249-273, for the contrast of these opposite poles of interest and their relation to personal activity.

¹⁴ Jones, *ibid.*; Chap. XI, "Anal-Erotic Character Traits".

opposed to that of love, these are among the manifestations of such a hidden fixation of interest and these appear in the *Ring* in those who become willing slaves to the seduction of the gold. Certain of these characteristics were prominent enough in Wagner's personality to convince one that he shared in no small degree in infantile fixation at this level. Such a fixation, common enough to mankind in one degree or another, determines in its more marked form a strong reaction toward virtues which stand at the opposite pole. Thus there are produced those extremes of personality and of behavior which were present in Wagner's career. The struggle of the libido to overcome a bondage so deeply within the personality also often manifests a force of activity which proves invincible and results in esthetic works such as those which Wagner has created, tremendous in power and immeasurable in range of beauty.¹⁵ They are the fruit of the intensity of the struggle through which alone the libido attains the higher life in the face of such deep infantile attraction. The achievement likewise bears with it the expression of the conflict of desires all along the way from the lowest levels of the personality to the highest possibilities of victorious sublimation of individual desires. At every step of the way there is the conflict between the two opposing tendencies. One seeks to secure the ego in its undisturbed maintenance of a satisfaction once found, the other to discover the ego's fuller capacity in the surrender of all the partial aims to a centralizing union which will carry the ego beyond itself in object love. Thus the conflict is most definitely manifest in the love life. But in other fields of endeavor also all the partial interests of the personality participate in the strife. Any somatic area with its function is at least in part the representative of the same struggle to maintain the immediate satisfaction or to surrender to a larger aim of the personality beyond the self.

One may apply this idea of fixation and of the effort to overcome it to the bodily illnesses which afflicted Wagner throughout his life. His letters as well as his autobiography contain frequent testimony to the distressing disease of the skin of which he was a victim.¹⁶ Medical psychology has come to recognize the connection, through unconscious stimulation of the nerve supply of the skin, between skin disorders and the unconscious preoccupation of the ego with this portion of the body and the infantile satisfactions to be won through

¹⁵ Jones, l.c.

¹⁶ *Br.* I, p. 83 (to Minna, Oct. 12, 1851); *Mein Leben*, II, p. 644.

it.¹⁷ The suffering occasioned by such unconsciously stimulated pathological skin activity may be offset in another direction by special pleasure derived in relation to the skin. One is reminded here of Wagner's well-known vanity in regard to his personal appearance but more particularly his almost irresistible craving for soft fabrics in contact with his skin or even in his rooms about him.¹⁸ A similar unconscious determination, founded in the nutritive-waste area already discussed, might be conceived to have played a large part in the other form of illness of which he makes frequent complaint and which was an important factor in causing his death.¹⁹ This was his chronic intestinal difficulty. Such a conception again would account for his fanatic tendency to adopt and reject various water cures and to follow extreme theories as to diet.²⁰

In the strictly psychic realm, which must concern us here, this same conception of fixation, and of the struggle which it occasions, illumines many otherwise unexplained phenomena in Wagner's life. The sharp contradictions in his personal character have awakened a criticism which, nevertheless, is compelled to acknowledge the greatness of his achievement. Newman has set forth the contrast between many elements of his personal character and his artistic greatness but with no attempt at psychological explanation. Newman is a trenchant writer, unsparing in his criticism of Wagner's personality and of his work. He tears asunder the exaggerated idealism which earlier admirers have built about Wagner's memory and sets him in the light of hard, clear fact. But his summary of Wagner's service to mankind points us toward the background where these facts and where the power of his artistic success find interpretation: "Wagner was one of those dynamically charged personalities, after whose passing the world can never be the same as it was before he came . . . one of the very few who are able so to fill the views of a whole

¹⁷ S. E. Jelliffe and W. A. White, *Diseases of the Nervous System*, Philadelphia and New York, 1923, p. 219.

¹⁸ *Br. I*, p. 167 (to Minna, Apr. 17, 1855).

¹⁹ *Br. I*, pp. 100, 195 (to Minna, Aug. 5, 1853, May 22, 1855); Jelliffe and White, *ibid.*, p. 173. See statement of Dr. Fr. Keppler in Henry Perl, *Richard Wagner in Venedig*, Augsburg, 1883, pp. VI-VIII, as to Wagner's illness and death.

²⁰ *Br. I*, pp. 112, 229 (to Minna, July 1, 1854, June 19, 1856); *V*, p. 143 (to Mathilde, May 30, 1859); *Mein Leben*, II, p. 645.

civilization with a new principle of vitality that the tingle of it is felt not only by the rarer but by the commonest spirits . . .”²¹

Wagner, then, has given us in his symbol of the ring of gold and in the development of the conflict that centers about its possession more than his consciousness has understood of inner discord, his own and that common to the folk. Does not this range of individual conflict which psychoanalysis opens before us afford explanation for the profundity of the human story contained in the drama and for the scope of the music through which it is poured forth? Does it not give significance, too, to some of the musical passages which seem to some harshly out of accord with a strictly formal perfection? This is a question which can be merely suggested as we turn rather to the consideration of the conflict as manifest through the dramatic text. Surely the music of life has its harsher notes which often make for discord, while its harmonies would fail of their richness of tone were they not composed of the lower motives which lie in the unconscious of the folk as well as of those which denote the higher aspirations of human development.

The personal interest lingers, as we have seen, at many partial planes of development. At any one of these there is the same possibility of fixation which would prevent further progress toward life's greater service. Nevertheless, as has been seen also, such a condition of fixation cannot be absolute where any possibility of development remains. The tendency of the ego to retain and merely multiply that which it already has obtained would mean the complete stagnation of life. This is impossible since life is activity. It has the force of moving energy and the nature of this energy in human life is desire. The libido therefore takes up its activity. Desire, colored by the rudimentary sex instinct present in the child's life, seeks out an object to attach to it the partial pleasures which the ego is already making its own. Thus the libido may become fixed in goals along the way which cannot prove healthily satisfactory for they are not the final reproductive ones. They are base to consciousness, which must repress them in the interests of higher ends. In the unconscious the presence of the libido intensifies the pleasure attached to them, thus renewing their attraction. Yet the libido is urging the individual toward the higher levels, so that conflict arises between the libido striving toward reproduction and the libidinally strengthened attachments of the ego to the baser ends.

²¹ E. Newman, *Wagner as Man and Artist*, London and Toronto, 1914, pp. 212, 213.

CHAPTER III

THE RELATION OF THE CHILD TO THE PARENT

The development of the life of the child cannot be a simple one. The complexities of its inner instinctive nature are only increased by its relation to other lives. These other individuals, with whom its contact is closest in the crucial years, those of infancy, we know to be the parents. The child, true to the very nature of life, must strive intuitively toward its own independence of existence. It naturally is passing out beyond itself upon the road to consummation of love in the future sexual object. Yet it is not without objects along the way to this final goal. Its first love object, the parent, should give stimulus to this further progress of love. But it may come to pass very easily that love becomes fixed upon the parent because the unfolding libido has become diverted to the ego-serving ends. These "nutritive" ends, then, become too greatly infused with the character of the love instinct. The incest barrier, arising against the unconscious love between parent and child, represents not alone the danger of a direct displacement of love upon the parent, the love which belongs to another object still to be found. The barrier is raised also against the character of the egotistic satisfaction which such love necessarily would assume. The relation of the parent to the child is too dependent a relation on the one side, too dominant upon the other, to permit the truly reproductive relationship. This can exist only between two equally independent beings. The child-parent relationship represents too well the possibility of the gratification of the separate ends of the ego since it places the child too passively in the hands of the parent. Or at the best it permits only such a return of service to the interests of the parent as Brünnhilde early devotes to Wotan. There is not sufficient scope in this love for that mutual exchange of gifts which marks the love of Siegfried and the awakened Brünnhilde.

The results of too strong an attachment to the parent, entangled as this is with the separate ego interests, manifests itself when the time for maturity is reached. Then the ego interests will be found to have forced themselves as goals into the place of the libido's reproductive aims to be realized through the sexual object. The love desire will be found to have been dragged unconsciously to serve

20582

those individual functional interests in which reproduction cannot take place. This unconscious withdrawal of interest will manifest itself in disturbances of the reproductive function and in general incapacity for creative endeavor. The sense of egotistic power and self-indulgence may find gratification, while the character, as has been seen, will manifest traits which correspond to such unconscious aims. These in turn will seek gratification in indirect and symbolic forms, through which domination or other means of personal gratification will control activity.

Apparently it cannot be otherwise than that all love is sexual in nature. It therefore has that intense character which creates both its fruitful power and its danger of diversion to selfish ends. Children's love, as elementary sex love, contains the danger even while it grants all possibility for later development. Wagner considers all love as of but one nature: "Love in fullest reality is possible only between the sexes. Only as man and woman can we truly love, while all other love is only derived from this love, originating from it, related to it or artificially modeled after it . . . assuredly the love for a child or a friend is only a sort of makeshift, a fact best known to those who have attained complete happiness in the love between the sexes . . ." ¹ Psychoanalytic research, as it looks from adult love back through the unconscious memories of childhood and then forward through the development of the child toward adulthood, recognizes this oneness of love. It finds in childhood that the attachment is made first of all to the parent of the opposite sex while a corresponding feeling of hostility, largely in the form of rivalry, exists toward the parent of the same sex.² The child as an emotional dynamic being contains this rudiment of love without sufficient guiding control on the part of consciousness. Its reactions, therefore, are strong ones. They exist in accordance with the pleasure principle and they necessarily follow the pathways of the separate bodily and emotional interests. The love is intense, not because it has found the greatness of the adult consummation in pouring itself out through its object, but because, in its partial ways, it is intent upon the service of the egotistic interests.

The fixation of the force of love upon such infantile goals is the danger from which the child should be rescued through the process of its own natural progressive development. The impairment of the reproductive life, which mars sexual love and bars the way to other

¹ *Br.* XI, pp. 27, 50.

² Freud, *Introduc. to Psa.*, pp. 286 ff.

socially reproductive goals, will exist to just the extent to which the libido has not freed itself for maturity. Adult lives bear the marks of such fixation upon infantile goals. They may show permanent adherence to them or be subject to regression to such levels when confronted by especially difficult demands of reality. Whatever the attainment of adult ends may be, these have been won by severe conflict with such tendency to return to the past.

Thus this conflict between the tendencies, regressive and progressive, between the nutritive and the reproductive instincts, is found not alone in the child who is struggling upward out of the danger of fixation. The Ring dramas present not merely the problems of the son or the daughter. The conflict is there also from the adult point of view, Wotan, the father, in fact, being the central figure of the dramas. It may be seen that the situation is not one passed through to be left behind once for all. The difficulties as well as the imperishable values of life rest upon the preservation of the past in the unconscious. The infantile attitudes remain and the conflict continues with the desires which maintain their original nature out of sight of consciousness. It is thus that the parents share the same difficulties that beset their children. They find their unconscious infantile impulses revived through their children. They, too, from the unconscious, are subject to the pleasure principle rather than controlled by the outflow of creative love upon the objects of reality. It may be that they have never given themselves to any great extent to adult development so that unconsciously they are all too ready to reciprocate in the reactions of their children toward them. The progress of the child to life's supreme fulfilments is difficult enough as the libido struggles through the mass of egotistic satisfactions, whether these satisfactions have been realized or only nursed in phantasy. It is made more difficult because these are fostered to greater strength by the parent's unconscious participation in the child's feeling. The parent strives as Wotan strove to keep the daughter's will his own, while, having yielded, he may bar the way again to the suitor whom he himself has chosen.

The father-daughter relationship is prominent in the *Ring of the Nibelung* as indeed it may be found in every one of Wagner's music dramas. The problem is the same whether viewed as that of the father or of the child. It centers about the winning of the individual right for creative love. Freedom must be won from those earlier attractions which threaten the realization of such personal independence. Each succeeding generation arises to take up the service of

love, the racial extension of its boundaries through creation of new beings or of new social values. The ego, on the other hand, would fain possess a magic ring which can multiply the means for its own enjoyment and stop there. Seeking this, it involves love in tragedy. It brings the curse which only a true pity, arising out of a love that goes beyond itself, can redeem.

Woman's character was drawn by Wagner in strong, clear lines. Nowhere else did it assume such varied forms as in the Ring dramas to represent all the vicissitudes of her psychic development. The relation of father and daughter, which here receives profound treatment, may be followed briefly in Wagner's other works. It is present more or less distinctly even in his earliest works, those unpublished or less well known. It stands out in its own form in each one of the dramas familiar to the public. Rienzi, the hero of the opera of the same name, a fatherly figure in his position toward his people, is brother to Irene. But the brother, according to psychoanalysis, is psychically a representative of the father.³ To this brother, in his political downfall, Irene flees, sacrificing her life and the claims of the lover whom she had found in the outer world. Senta, in *The Flying Dutchman*, yields to the demands of the older man and forsakes her younger lover to die with the former. This older man, again a typical father figure to the girl's absorbed phantasy, is idealized for her through his sufferings. Her pity raises a dreamlike, infantile type of attachment to an exalted ideal, which lifts it out of the plane of a reality where such father-daughter love may not continue to exist. In *Tannhäuser* there is the motive of the father's renunciation of the daughter foreshadowed in Wolfram's great-hearted withdrawal of his suit for Elisabeth's love to aid her in the reclamation of the younger lover. The latter, *Tannhäuser*, is in bondage to that other woman form, the seductive mother of the unconscious desire, symbolized in the undying Venus dwelling in the secret cavern of the mountain.

The same father-daughter relationship is more obscured in *Lohengrin* yet its various features are no less present in Elsa's struggle to give her faith unreservedly to the stranger who has come to her from afar. The rival mother figure, Ortrud, stands in Elsa's path. Her deep-rooted jealousy plays upon the timid distrust of the younger woman to render the latter at last incapable of delivering herself to the mysteries of the untried love. Elsa's lover must depart

³ Rank, *Incest-motiv*, pp. 443 ff.

leaving her to die in the presence of the returned brother and the fatherly king.

Isolde breaks the bonds of convention which would have bound her to the aging King Marke though her love cannot attain full freedom to receive her lover in life. She must follow Tristan into death, the shadowy land of his choosing, the land of dreams where reality cannot disturb. The work of renunciation, begun in Wolfram, its need recognized too late by the generous King Marke, attained by Wotan only through bitter conflict, reaches its perfect work in Hans Sachs. Here in the *Meistersinger* the father-daughter relationship is represented with the poignancy of its tragic possibilities softened by the warmth of a love carried over into the transformations which reality demands. The humor of the aspiring Beckmesser's situation is not the least of these sublimated forms in which reality may receive the unequal attachment which the unconscious nurtures between child and parent. In Hans Sachs the transformation of the love reaches its culmination in conscious renunciation on his part and devoted friendly attachment on the side of Eva, whom he gives freely to the younger Walther. Kundry, the strange, wild woman of *Parsifal*, typifies mother, seductress, child. She is the "eternal womanly," a phrase frequently borrowed from Goethe in Wagner's prose discussions, appearing in many forms to perform her service or to exercise her wiles from generation to generation. She is alternately the woman nature in its selfishly destructive form or in its ministration to the lives and needs of others, until she, too, delivered from the evil Klingsor, is brought, through the younger man, to full salvation, even though in an idealized form.⁴

It is possible only thus imperfectly to indicate the prevalence of this theme through all of Wagner's artistic work. True, in each of these dramas one should look first for that other aspect of the parent-child complex, that of the mother-son attachment.⁵ One complex does not exclude the other for they are only different aspects of the same thing. We may raise the question, therefore, as to the place of this form, the father-daughter relationship, in Wagner's personality. Richard Wagner was a man with a marvelous craving for affection, a deep, insatiable yearning for the love of women. He won a quick response from them through his works, while it was largely their

⁴ Cf. O. Mensendieck, "Die Gral-Parzivalsage und Richard Wagners *Parsifal*", *Bayreuther Blätter*, XXXVIII, 1915, pp. 163-176, 189, 190.

⁵ Mensendieck, *ibid.*, pp. 182, 183; M. Graf, *Richard Wagner im "fliegenden Holländer"*, Leipzig und Wien, 1911, pp. 24 ff.

inspiration that made these works possible. His personality strongly attracted women in friendship and in love. His life was not without its many love experiences, sometimes of a wayward, questionable nature. He always craved more than any one could give him, seeming to find the possibility of satisfaction only in those who were inaccessible to him.

It would be necessary to follow Wagner's life closely step by step in order fully to trace the strong influence exerted upon him by the women he knew. His love to his mother was of that contradictory character of tender devotion and wayward selfishness which marks the conflict already present in the child between the excessive demands of the unconscious phantasy and the limitations of reality. Wagner reveals the solicitude which his wild behavior awakened in his mother and sisters.⁶ He tells us of the early impressions received from his sisters, which elicited a lively emotional response.⁷ He admits his especial regard for the opinion of the gentle and dignified older sister Rosalie, whom he was passionately desirous of pleasing through his earliest efforts.⁸ The passion for these youthful efforts was derived from others also, for in early years Wagner started upon his long career of ardent relations which were to stimulate and sometimes seriously to hinder him in his artistic endeavors.⁹

The gifted dramatic singer, Schroeder-Devrient, inspired the young composer with a courage for continuance in his artistic work though difficulties thronged upon him. She, like others, rallied to his financial assistance to the best of her ability.¹⁰ Wagner was not averse to receiving such assistance from the women whose admiration he evoked nor even from those whose love he secured. This was a phase of that constant financial entanglement which marked this character forcefully independent in so many other ways and which points to the unconscious fixation of love at the nutritive level of experience. It is a remnant of that relation of the child when the first love object, the parent, is the source also of the child's nutriment. The fact that there had been solicited for Wagner a promise of financial aid from the wealthy mother of Jessie Laussot,

⁶ *Mein Leben*, I, pp. 24, 50, 64-66.

⁷ *Mein Leben*, I, p. 21.

⁸ *Mein Leben*, I, pp. 87, 88.

⁹ J. Kapp, *Richard Wagner und die Frauen*, Berlin, 1921, pp. 20 ff; see Br. X, 3, 4, 57 (to Theodor Apel, Dec. 16, 1832, Sept. 22, 1836[5]).

¹⁰ *Mein Leben*, I, pp. 151, 283, 284, 320, 321; pp. 396, 397 register childish complaint against his benefactress.

under an arrangement in which the latter participated, did not prevent the springing up of a sudden attachment between Wagner and Jessie, based upon a sympathy on her part with his work. This relationship bid fair to wreck forever Wagner's first matrimonial connection as early as 1850, the year after his flight from Dresden, while it did assist in the rupture of Jessie's relations with her husband.¹¹ Frau Julie Ritter and Frau Dr. Eliza Wille were Wagner's loyal friends and supporters at different periods of his life when almost all other friends had failed him.¹²

By his side through years of deprivation and struggle, of harassed wandering and forced exile, through the moderate successes and the faint promises of future recognition, stood the faithful Minna Planer, Wagner's first wife. Their partnership was far from being an untroubled one. Yet time will be unable fully to measure the influence upon Wagner's life and work of the companionship of this practical woman, patient and helpful toward her wayward husband, the man of genius, and yet often impatient through the increasing irritation of her own harassed nature and in her inability to enter into the full significance of her husband's work.¹³ It was not strange but neither was it less galling to her that Wagner should turn from this humbler woman to Mathilde Wesendonck, than whom no one exerted a deeper inspirational influence upon the inception and completion of his works.¹³ Their relationship has been much idealized by Wagner's admirers as by himself. It was kept upon the plane of only mental communion in obedience to Mathilde's wish. Fruitful as this love was in Wagner's life and strictly as its ideal relations were kept in outward form, there is evidence here, too, of the child's clinging love to the mother. The child-parent relationship might be ascribed to both the lovers for Mathilde clung to Wagner with a childlike trust in his greater wisdom in things of art, from which she learned and through which she, too, became productive in a lesser degree.¹⁴ And Wagner himself received material aid in various forms and throughout a long period of time, not always directly from Mathilde but also through her importunities from her long-suffering

¹¹ *Mein Leben*, I, pp. 515-517, 522-524, 527, 528; Kapp, *ibid.*, pp. 86-103.

¹² *Mein Leben*, I, p. 510, II, pp. 668, 865, 868; *Richard Wagners Briefe an Frau Julie Ritter*, München, 1920; *Br.* XIII; *passim* (Letters to Frau Wille and her reminiscences of Wagner); Kapp, *ibid.*, pp. 112, 113, 129, 141, 153, 214, 254, 257.

¹³ See Kapp, *ibid.*, pp. 270 ff.

¹⁴ *Br.* V, pp. 347-351 (Mathilde to Wagner, Jan. 16, 1862, July 3, 1863).

husband.¹⁵ Otto Wesendonck was a veritable King Marke in his generous patience, whose fate it was, however, not to drive the lovers into death but to aid them finally to a calmer acceptance of the things of reality.

Others of Wagner's relationships were more fruitful of disaster than of success and manifested in still greater degree the infantile nature of his craving for love. But it was not until he had found in Cosima von Bülow the one woman who, like himself, was bold enough to defy the criticisms of the world to become his in spite of earlier ties that his life found that peace of home and the satisfaction of children which hitherto he had craved in vain. Yet even here there was enough and to spare of his understanding of the nature of woman to complete her representation in his music dramas still unfinished. Still, in all his dramatic representation of her, there is the picture of the struggle between the desire of the older man and the claim of the younger hero upon the woman they both love. The late second marriage with Cosima was the winning of the woman from her former husband, apparently the final triumph of the unconscious wish, so familiar to psychoanalysis, to supersede the father with the mother, a wish preserved through a lifetime scarred by the conflicts which such a desire engenders. Thus again, in the ever-repeated situation in his poetry, we have the reflection of the conflict waging ceaselessly in the restless spirit of the great poet-musician.¹⁶

For after all the situation is alike for those of either sex or of either age, old or young. The same fundamental condition repeats itself in the unconscious even though in reverse form. The father-daughter attachment or that of mother-son, as we have seen, is fundamentally the same situation looked at from different points of view. The child's first experiences with love, which create the craving for their repetition, are associated with an object unequal in age. These experiences are also of a different plane of interest than that shared with the later equal adult love object. The parent who carries about in the unconscious just such an unsatisfied craving out of the childhood which is past is seeking his or her own original child-parent relationship in the child of the later generation. The parent satisfies the ego's own long repressed desires fixed upon the former parent

¹⁵ Kapp, *ibid.*, pp. 129, 130, 158; *Br.* V, pp. 133, 149, 152 (to Mathilde, May 9, 30, June 21, 1859); *Br.* VI, p. 57 (to Otto Wesendonck, Aug. 28, 1859).

¹⁶ See Graf, *ibid.*, p. 5.

by lavishing upon this later child that which the ego unconsciously craves.

The impulse toward sexual love between parent and child, according to Wagner's belief, is fundamental to human nature.¹⁷ What we know of the early history of the race confirms this. The imperfect knowledge which folklore gives us of the earliest activities of human society seems to prove that such sexual relationships within the family formed the early means of the exercise of sex love.¹⁸ Freud has named the unconscious survival of such inclination, revived in each individual, from the tragedy of Sophocles. He designates it the Œdipus complex.¹⁹ Wagner has assumed the Œdipus situation to be a natural one. Œdipus and his mother, as he has expressed it, "acted according to natural instinct". Only when they awoke to consciousness of what they had done, he says, did they realize their offense against that relationship which had grown up, also naturally, in the family life, that of a differently directed love between parents and children and brothers and sisters. The higher psychic nature within them, Wagner continues, was filled with terror and abhorrence, such as their experience arouses in us, "because they had outraged irreconcilably the *accustomed* relationships to our mother and the opinions formed through these".²⁰ This same situation is true in the unconscious survivals of the past whether for the male or the female child. This earliest attachment, natural to the child as the beginning of its love life, has to be transformed into a different affection within the family. As sexual love it must be directed to another object which shall be outside the family boundary. "In the family the natural bonds between those who procreate and those who are procreated are developed into the bonds of custom, and only out of custom again develops a natural inclination of brothers and sisters toward one another."²¹ It is then that the stimulus to sex love may return through the "awakener" who shall come from without the home.

It may be that the parent, like Wotan, no longer finds a satisfactory companion in the one time loved object of adulthood and so

¹⁷ IV, "O.u.D.", pp. 55-57.

¹⁸ J. G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 4 vols., London, 1910, II, pp. 40, 118, 541; IV, pp. 315, 362; *Folk-lore*, II, pp. 238, 239. For discussion of the place of incest in the unconscious cf. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, New York, 1918, Chap. I.

¹⁹ See Freud, *Introduc. to Psa.*, pp. 286 ff.

²⁰ IV, "O.u.D.", pp. 55, 56.

²¹ IV, "O.u.D.", p. 56.

turns back to the child, whom it can make more subservient to the ego's will for power and selfish delight. It was when "the pleasure of young love grew faint" (VI, 37 W) that Wotan fell victim to his longing for power. Then, in a second flaming after love, he descended to the mother of all, Erda, "primitive Wala of the eternal world" (V, 261 R). With his power he compelled her to give him a representative of herself in a best beloved daughter, Brünnhilde. She was to be the daughter, chief among her sisters, who should live to increase his glory, serving him in Walhall, "With eight sisters I brought thee up. Through you, Walküren, I would turn away . . . a shameful end to the eternal gods. That strong for strife the foe should find us, I bade you get me heroes . . ." (VI, 38, 39 W).

Wagner longed for children of his own. It was a longing to which he made constant reference in his letters, sometimes with a pathetic playfulness but always with an undertone of deep seriousness. At one time he is more explicit, "With my 50th year there came to me such a yearning for a daughterly element", and he goes on to explain upon this basis some of those curious associations formed about himself in the lonely days of deepest discouragement in Vienna.²² A note of paternal tenderness is evident throughout his letters to Mathilde Wesendonck, to whom this remark is addressed, and that childlike trustfulness already noted is present in her replies. This is true particularly of the earlier days of their correspondence when the love between them was warmest. The later days in Vienna were those when Wagner's reproductive libido fought an almost losing fight with the external hindrances in its way, hindrances increased because the libido succumbed in more than one way to the temptation to prostitute creative love to self-indulgence and self-support. But these days belonged also to that time of crisis when the libido, never in its darkest hour entirely surrendering the creative task, rose again to the opportunities which external fortune set before it.

Wagner expressed an almost terrified sympathy with Wotan, which appears to have a close relation to the conflict of the god's parenthood, whatever may have been the poet's other grounds of interest in the tragedy of the god's character. He was almost ready to cast out the great scene in the second act of the "Walküre". He counts it the most important in the tetralogy upon which all the rest depends, and the entire "Walküre" "the most tragic thing [up to

²² *Br.* V, p. 321 (Aug. 3, 1863). See Kapp, *ibid.*, pp. 206, 207.

that time at least] I have ever conceived".²³ The scene to which Wagner refers is the one in which Wotan relates to Brünnhilde his creation of her for his will and which ends with the acknowledgment of his fate, the necessity of relinquishment of his greater task to the younger man, ". . . a hero to whom I have never turned in aid, who, strange to the god, free of his favor, unconsciously, without command, out of his own need, with his own protection, shall perform the deed which I must fear" (VI, 40, 41 W). Wagner pronounces the last act, that in which the father surrenders to this hero Brünnhilde, the object of his inmost wish, "apparently the best thing which I have yet written. A frightful storm—of the elements and of hearts—which gradually lulls itself to the magic slumber of Brünnhilde."²⁴ Surely the music that enfolds the god as he lays away the dearest object of his affection could come only from the heart of one who knew love's profoundest conflict as it rises into love's greatest victory.

Did Wagner enter into Wotan's conflict and understand also the struggle through which woman must pass in relation to the father because he, too, nurtured a divided love? Was his libido torn between inner fixation upon those more passive satisfactions which belong to the first love of childhood and the desire for that reproductive life which finds constant renewal in ceaseless activity? It would take us too far here to follow fully this strife as it is indicated in Wagner's life. Phases of his fixation, with the effort of the libido to wrest its freedom from these bonds, have already come before us. The alternate rise and fall of his nature is everywhere evidence of a mighty struggle in which he is engaged.²⁵ Now he gives vent to a longing for rest, to weary disgust with the world of disappointment and change. But at once there arises the unquenchable fire of his creative activity. His letters are characterized by his vacillation between these moods, or rather by the abruptness with which the buoyancy of his libido breaks through his deepest despair.

The alternation of the two aspects of life nowhere finds more touching expression than in a birthday letter written to his aging mother :

"When I feel myself now so harassed, now so bound, always striving, seldom knowing the joy of complete success, often the prey

²³ *Br.* IX, Teil II, pp. 92, 96 (to Liszt, Sept. 13, 1855).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 114, 115 (March, 1856).

²⁵ For the place of Wagner's mother attachment in his life and creative works, see Graf, *ibid.*, esp. pp. 27 ff.

of worry over failure,—when I feel myself almost always sensitively wounded through rough contacts with the external world—which, ah! only so rarely—almost never! answers to the inner wish,—then only the enjoyment of nature can satisfy me. When, often weeping and with bitter complaint, I throw myself into her arms, she always comforts me and exalts me while she shows me how imaginary are all the sorrows which cause us anxiety. If we reach up too high, nature shows us very tenderly that we belong only to her, that we have arisen from her like these trees, these plants, which develop from the germ, blossom, warm themselves in the sun, rejoice in the invigorating freshness and neither wither nor die until they have scattered their seed, which again brings forth germs and plants, so that that which has been created once continues in ever renewed youth. If then I feel myself to belong so closely to nature,—how does all vain egoism take flight, and if I stretch out my hand to every good soul, why then should I not long much rather for the mother from whose womb I sprang and who now withers—while I bloom!”

And then we hear him, like Siegfried dreaming in the forest, and we know from what deep source the composer drew the exquisite strains which form the “forest weavings”:

“How, when I leave the smoke of the city for a beautiful leafy dale, stretch myself upon the moss, gaze into the slender height of the trees, listen to a sweet woodland bird, until for very comfort a tear escapes me, which I gladly leave undried,—thus it is as if I stretched out my hand to thee from all the confusion and strangeness to call to thee, God keep thee, thou good old mother,—and when some day he takes thee, may he make it gentle and soft for thee! It is not death of which I speak; we live on for thee, in truth a richer, more diversified life than thine could be. Therefore thank God who has so richly blessed thy womb!—”²⁶

Thus life springs up in Wagner's thought even while he is most withdrawn in phantasy. For, like his hero, he could not tarry long in his dreams but was ever and again away at the call of reality.

It would seem to have been the unconscious longing to be a child again in love that precipitated Wagner into the long misery of an ill-mated marriage. There was more in Minna, sometimes of the caretaking mother, sometimes, especially later in life, of the dependent child, than of the partner equal in daring, creative adventure.²⁷

²⁶ *Br. III*, pp. 148, 149 (Dresden, Sept. 19, 1846).

²⁷ *Mein Leben*, I, pp. 116, 118, 146; *Br. I, II*, passim (to Minna). See Mensendieck, *ibid.*, pp. 181, 182, who recognizes that Minna's “goodheartedness and thoughtful motherliness” bound Wagner to her. “Minna always remained the mother to Wagner”, he continues, “she never learned to give

Wagner acknowledged her faithfulness to his daily needs amid untold hardships but he missed in her that love which rejoices in a force which bids one, if need be, forsake all hope of worldly success. He admits the violent but temporary character of the passion with which he bound her to him, so like the excess of the child's demand for the mother's love. He writes to her after they had separated for a time, "Blind greed for the undiminished possession of the other wipes away all reason; self-will wins and—the results, sorrow, care, tribulation and grievous misfortune . . . are not absent . . ." "See, dear child!" he continues, in answer to Minna's reproaches because he had published facts from their life together, "when I wanted to give people an idea of the origin of my works and thereby the development of my life moods, I could not, without remaining not understood, avoid so important and decisive a turning point in life as that associated with our union".²⁸ Nor can we enter with sympathetic understanding into the human story of the *Ring of the Nibelung* unless we appreciate also something of the great conflict of life as it surged within the creator of these music dramas.

The dramas represent life in its various phases. Both poetry and music have surrounded each of these with a richness of expression which presents the details of the problem before us. It should be possible, therefore, in study of the dramas, to discover something of those partial interests of the ego which entangle love in dangerous attachments and to follow the libido as it attains its goal wounded but triumphant.

up her habitual attitude of guardianship and correction and to gain understanding of the artistic personality developing beside her".

²⁸ *Br.* II, p. 88 (Luzern, May 18, 1859).

PART II

THE PROBLEM IN THE DRAMA

CHAPTER IV

THE BONDAGE TO INFANTILE GOALS

The introductory portion of this drama of life, represented in the *Ring of the Nibelung*, the "Rheingold", arises with a twofold significance out of the unconscious. It speaks in the first place of those infinite depths of existence in which the individual personality conceives itself to have originated. The river Rhine presents that profound peace which lies, a fond, deep dream, beyond this existence of ever changing reality. Phantasy yearns towards such peace in some remote future as it imagines it to have constituted the mystic preliminary home of our being. This vague dream ideal, on the other hand, has a concrete basis in actual occurrence. The first individual experience of life lies in the prenatal home of absolute protection within the mother's womb. There, within the waters of birth, which, in the *Ring*, find their symbolization in the river Rhine, the child lives in undisturbed contentment.¹ Only the stirring of its own life marks its progress toward later independent existence among the objects of external reality. The drama allows only a brief reminder of this unbroken peace which precedes life. That unbroken peace gives way almost at once to the distinctness of individual forms. Undulating syllables, passing over into distinct words, voice the appearance of concrete, individual personalities as the Rhine maidens become visible in the element about them.

These maidens are symbols for definite forms of human life in the fresh, spontaneous appearance of the newborn child. They rejoice in their movement, creatures tasting the sheer delight of an existence devoted as yet only to the unsullied enjoyment of that which is directly at hand. They are images of childhood emerging into life unconscious of evil or of good. They represent pure action in acceptance of all that surrounds them, instinctively finding every-

¹ Cf. Rank, *Myth of Birth of Hero*, pp. 69 ff.; Freud, *Interpr. of Dreams*, p. 244; *Introduc. to Psa.*, p. 132.

thing as object of life's activity inspired by unhindered love. The objects of their play, the waters of the Rhine and the gold hidden in its depths, are as elemental as the medium in which the child experiences its prenatal existence, or as the interests of the child's own body which engage its first uncritical attention. To these maidens, as to the child, all is innocently pure. The newborn child is at the lowest rung of experience where moral and immoral, the clean and the foul do not exist. All that enters into the child's interest, even the lowest functions and products of bodily activity, are equally beautiful and good. If they may serve later for the ground of debasement of the higher interests, for the present they fall under no such dishonor. To the Rhine maidens all that surrounds them is the gift of the father's love, of him to whom they owe existence itself. The gold is to them a thing of especial delight, of unblemished glory, "Rhine gold, Rhine gold, glistening delight, how laughest thou so bright and so clear! . . . Happy the play we scatter about thee. Shimmereth the current, gloweth the flood; leaping and dancing and singing we float round thy bed in the stream" (V, 209, 210 R).

But just in the midst of innocent delight appear the dangers to life's development. Interest in the elements of the child's play is mingled with the possibility of that exercise of love which snares the libido to fixation upon these lower elements. Bodily interests, though the starting point both for mental and physical activity, become dangerously associated with the love to the parent and the manifestation of the parent's love to the child. This mutual love is an important factor in the stimulation of the child toward the proper exercise of its basic interests and more important still in the instigation of the child to progress in transforming these interests to their future reproductive values. The love itself, in the course of this evolution, takes on that sublimated form in which the child renders filial service to the parent and the parent directs effort to the progressive welfare of the child. Yet such progressive love is opposed, as has been seen, by other possibilities within the personality. The father's love may appear to the daughter in its beneficent aspect or as an ugly form like Alberich, offering that which has only the appearance of love. This latter manifestation means that the father's love remains at the plane of regressive interest, that of his unconscious infantile desire for unchanging, passive pleasure. Sooner or later this attitude reveals the truly destructive nature which is the opposite of truly active love. It is an interest unconsciously fixed upon the partial

elements of the child's nature and upon its partial ego-centered activity, directed even to bodily areas with their functions and products. Alberich, representing such an attitude, descends to the appropriation completely to his own desire of the elementary substance symbolized in the gold.

The Rhine suddenly changes while the maidens are playing, "It grows dark, there is a cry" (V, 201 R). An evil being appears where there had been thought only of the father's goodness. The children are not certain at first that this is evil. Someone whom they have not seen before comes to join their sport. His presence rouses their capacity for love but he is not lovable. This object's characteristics are ugly. He is recognized as the enemy who threatens the innocent happiness of their treasure, "Phew, the ugly thing! . . . Guard the gold! Father warned of such an enemy" (V, 201 R). The idea of power is already present in the child's mind, "He would not despise the beauty of the gold if he knew all its wonders! . . . The wealth of the world he might win for his own who should make of the Rhine gold a ring, which will lend its owner measureless power" (V, 210, 211 R). It is an unproductive wealth, however, the magic formula for which is available only to him who will have none of that "eternally self-renewing and creating" love which passes out beyond itself. No better symbol of this contrasted unalterable power, the might merely of heaping up more and more of its peculiar golden wealth, could be found than in the ring, the closed circle without beginning and end. "Only that which has no beginning has no end,— " are Wagner's words in regard to this symbol, "but nothing real is without beginning, only that which is imaginary."² "Accursed circlet, fearful ring!" cries Brünnhilde, standing at the fulfilment of its pernicious work (VI, 253 G). Then only is it redeemed through her voluntary act as she yields it with her life and the Rhine maidens carry it once more to the original home of the gold as one of the elements at the beginning of life.

In the external dramatized form in which the facts of the unconscious life are presented Alberich is simply the enemy anticipated by the father who gave the treasure to the guardianship of the children. Psychologically the appearance of Alberich is of far deeper significance. First he is a representative of the evil aspect of nature as opposed to the good. He dwells in darkness, the gods dwell in the light. This suggests, further, the more profound con-

² *Br.* XI, p. 26.

trast between the primitive elements of man's nature which haunt the regions of the unconscious and the higher nature which appears openly to the conscious point of view. The baser aspect of the nature is revealed in Alberich's mocking words to Wotan upon the latter's visit to the realm of the Nibelung. Thither Alberich had carried the gold torn from the maidens' possession and there had Wotan descended in the first submission to that darker side of desire which draws him to Alberich's level. Not only is the contrast in the two characters made evident but the actual conflict also between the two phases of the psychic nature which the characters represent. Into this strife the god is precipitating himself in yielding to the lust for the gold. Alberich reveals the dark power of the repressed unconscious nature rising to the conflict in which now the higher, now the lower nature shall triumph. For the moment Alberich breathes more than a hint of the evil forces which will arise to enslave all that the higher aspirations of divine nature have attained, "You who live there above, breathed upon by soft airs, laughing and loving . . . Have a care for the hosts of night. The Nibelungen horde will arise from the mute depths to day!" (V, 243, 244 R).

Such darker possibilities of human nature are those which present themselves to the daughters swimming in the river Rhine. If Wotan is to be found to represent the father in his higher nature, Alberich, as a contrasting form, presents unconcealed the evil possibility of father desire. The father as the male is the aggressor in the unconscious father-daughter attachment.³ The Rhine maidens respond to Alberich's advances with childishly merry wonder, even with the child's proneness to test its own aggressive powers in teasing of its object. The maidens are barely aware of the danger in the apparent love of this first object that presents itself. Love seems to them a possible thing and as pure as their childish phantasy may conceive it, "His love's flame almost caught me". But there is suspicion of the foulness of the evil, "A sulphur brand in the swell of the waves" (V, 212 R). Then suddenly the evil nature of such a love relationship stands revealed. The gold has been an object of delight to these maidens. Its guardianship has provided for them an avenue of loving service to the father. But now the gold is dragged into the dominion of evil. The element enjoyed in its unchanging beauty is snatched away. Desire on the part of the overpowering male reveals the father in his might as an object of fear. His lust

³ See Rank, *Inzest-Motiv*, p. 368.

makes of the gold a sordid reality. Alberich's greed seizes only upon the power which the gold has of multiplying in amount but he has no appreciation of the creative character which also lies in desire. Later he expresses only scorn for Siegfried who embodies this latter form of interest, "He makes no use of the most enviable power; he lives on laughing and glowing with love" (VI, 211 G). For the present Alberich has already laid his hand upon the gold to start it upon its course fruitful of the products of hate.

The danger of such a form of desire may be looked upon under two aspects, as it exists for the child or as it occurs in the nature of the father. The child approaches the renunciation of its first pleasure in the simpler elements of life, the things belonging to the ego, from the side of unquestioned enjoyment. The capacity for love expands with the child's development and with the quantity of pleasure that may be attached to any means of enjoyment. These early elements which engaged the child, becoming attached to love, show themselves dangerous because unproductive. They reveal the evil possibility, in that love might be content to sacrifice all its future opportunities to remain at the self-gratifying level which these things, pertaining only to the ego interests, represent. Love stopped at this plane of child-parent association would assume only the nutritive, egotistic aspect. This is the plane, too, to which the father reverts when he reaches back to absorb the child's interests to himself. He regresses to the baser side of his nature.

Wotan, the higher representative of the father nature, dwells in the world of other ideals. He maintains at least the semblance of reproductive existence, family, social function, high calling. Does such a one realize an actual satisfaction in all these external things or do the unconscious remnants of his own infantile ideals of love permit such adult interest to wane? It may be that the basis of Wotan's union with Fricka, a love now grown cold, was like that early flame that drove Wagner into his unhappy marriage with Minna. Once Wotan paid high price for his love, "In order to win thee for wife, I offered my eye in wooing" (V, 216 R). Wagner has introduced into "*Götterdämmerung*" another motive to explain Wotan's loss of an eye. Here the song of the Norne follows the Norse myth as she sings of the fountain of wisdom bubbling in the cool shade, "A fearless god came to drink at the spring; one of his eyes he paid as a lasting toll" (VI, 178 G). Wagner was not guilty of careless inconsistencies in his finished work. Whether in this instance be overlooked the apparent discrepancy or voluntarily

left it unexplained, the inconsistency need not be counted as actual, if one considers the deeper significance of both passages. Perhaps in the poet's intuition the two ideas were welded together in the conception of the nature of the wisdom which Wotan obtained. He entered through possession of Fricka into the mysteries of the sexual union toward which wisdom tends and in which wisdom concerning the further progress of life is found. Yet in Wotan's union with Fricka love has not proved altogether an inspiring force toward the reproductive life. The sacrifice that he makes at the beginning signifies, therefore, the compromising nature of his love. He has yielded so important a part of his being as the eye, a symbol of reproductive power and of the light of love which Wagner makes prominent throughout these dramas.⁴ Wotan's sacrifice differs from the atonement which Œdipus made for his sinful union with his mother in the fact that Wotan parted with only one of these symbolic organs.⁵

As one follows the course of Wotan's entanglement in the curse of the ego's desires, one can believe that Wagner, unconsciously at least, conceived the god to be in the position in which Wagner saw himself to have stood on the occasion of his first marriage.⁶ Wagner writes later in life, when composing his autobiography, "At that moment it was as clear to me as in a vision that my whole being was divided into cross currents each of which drew me in a quite different direction; the upper one, turned toward the sun, carried me forward like one dreaming while the under one held my nature

⁴ Cf. V. Koczian, "Wotan's Zoll", *Bayreuther Blätter*, XXXI, 1908, pp. 205-211, who discusses these two passages similarly and yet with a difference in interpretation.

⁵ See S. Ferenczi, "Symbolische Darstellung des Lust- und Realitätsprinzips im Œdipus-Mythos", *Imago*, I, 1912, pp. 276-284, esp. pp. 281-283; Rank, "Die Nacktheit in Sage und Dichtung", *Imago*, II, 1913, pp. 267-301, 409-446, esp. p. 300 for blindness as punishment, pp. 412, 413 for castration motive. Cf. also K. Abraham, "Einschränkungen und Umwandlungen der Schaulust bei den Psychoneurotikern nebst Bemerkungen über analoge Erscheinungen in der Volkspsychologie", *Jahrbuch der Psychoanalyse*, IV, 1914, pp. 23-88. Cf. also H. F. Delgado, "Der Liebesreiz der Augen", *Imago*, VII, 1921, pp. 127-130; Graf. *ibid.*, pp. 38, 39, for influence upon Wagner of his mother's eyes and his use of the eye motive in the *Ring* and elsewhere. Cf. Meinck, *ibid.*, esp. pp. 200, 202, for Wotan's eye as the sun.

⁶ See *Br. I*, p. 129, where Wagner writes to Minna from Zurich, Sept. 30, 1854, ". . . as I received your rather distrustful letter yesterday I was just at the point of composing the entrance of Fricka; the two things were not so much out of tune".

captive in deep, incomprehensible fear".⁷ This comparison is not made here without appreciation of the time and the circumstances of the writing of these words, in the period of Wagner's second marriage and with the aid of his second wife. It was long after the event of the first marriage, which he describes, and this first union, meanwhile, had passed through the test of many years. They were years of failure and of hard won victory, years in which strength and weakness of character were manifested both by Richard and Minna Wagner. Yet the words which Wagner wrote are significant of the two aims of character out of which their difficulties arose. Neither was exempt from the same strife active in the nature of each one and yet Minna could not follow where her husband's creative vision at least could see its way. Glasenapp expresses this well when he writes, "The one directed his gaze to what was coming, to that which was to be newly created; the other, with all the fibers of her being, was fixed upon whatever chanced to be the last tested situation, full of anxiety and fear before that which was new and unknown."⁸

Fricka, able at first to attract with a "captivating love",⁹ is the woman of level conventional ideas who has never known that creative abandon which saves love from stagnation. In her companionship the god also has come to dream of an eternal temple of changeless stability. "Let gate and door guard for me the blessed hall of bliss, honor and everlasting power rise to endless fame!" are the words which breathe from Wotan's dream (V, 213 R). Fricka is one incapable of such conflict as that soon to rack the soul of the god. True, she manifests passing distress at the imploring cry of Freia as the latter disappears into the hands of the giants, emblems of sheer physical power and precursors of that more subtle bondage already preparing its fetters for love. Yet Fricka's concern extends scarcely beyond herself. Freia, the figure of life-giving love, is reminiscent of those child forms whose joy has faded down below in the river Rhine. She is the child ripened to womanhood possessing still that spontaneous vitality without which the gods grow wan and gray (V, 231 R). Fricka contrasts with Freia as the child become woman without the transition over into truly creative love. Her outlook is the narrowed one which craves the advantage that provides only for the

⁷ *Mein Leben*, I, 161.

⁸ Glasenapp, *ibid.*, I, pp. 438, 439.

⁹ Wolzogen, *Guide to the Music of Richard Wagner's Tetralogy*, New York, 1906, p. 28.

self, its comfort or adornment, a prostitution of the capacity for love to the nutritive side of character.

There are many Frickas in society, women whose captivating charm finds the protection of a legal right which they claim without making good that claim by the exercise of creative love. Often their own inner unhappiness brings from them as from Fricka "the old storm, the old trouble" (VI, 24 W), while in happier moments their thought turns, as does Fricka's, to the possible enhancement of their personal charms. Fricka responds with characteristic question when Loge imparts to the gods the knowledge of the magic gold. She becomes for the moment forgetful of Freia's danger to ask, "Are the glittering things made from the golden toy suitable for woman's adornment?" (V, 227 R). Such a woman has need to urge the building of a home of splendor to keep her husband with her, "lordly dwelling, blissful homekeeping should bind thee with soft bands to dawdling rest" (V. 215 R).

Fricka's opposition to the activity of love assumes a dignified position even with her propensity to break into faultfinding. It opposes itself to a waywardness the basis of which she cannot understand. She is the servant of a propriety which can accept only that to which it has always been accustomed, which has no thought for that which never yet has been (VI, 31 W). Its power, supported by apparent right, is so much more dangerous to the daring nature of love. It places itself as a barrier in the way of a love, like that of Siegmund and Sieglinde, which arises simply out of its own nature to escape from "the oath that unites the unloving" (VI, 26 W). Fearing the restlessness of love, it emasculates it at the root. Thus Fricka later sees only Wotan himself, acting in accordance with the love that she feared, in Siegmund, the son of that love. "In him I find only thee, for through thee alone is he defiant", she complains to Wotan (VI, 32 W). And she orders the latter to take from Siegmund the sword which Wotan had bestowed upon him, that sword which Wagner, throughout the entire tetralogy, uses with such consistency as the magnificent symbol of man's reproductive power.¹⁰

¹⁰ See J. W. Weston, *The Legend of Sir Percival*, 2 vols., London, 1906, I, pp. 132-152, II, pp. 234, 235, 262-264, 292, for the sword in the Siegfried legend as elsewhere as a phallic symbol and through that in turn a symbol of sublimated attainment. See also P. C. van der Wolk, "Das 'Tri-theon' der alten Inder", *Imago*, VII, 1921, pp. 394-386, for an interesting discussion of the weapon as a phallic symbol, based upon the association of violence with reproduction, with which the slaying of a dragon also is connected.

Fricka, in her position supported by convention, is the enemy of the free impulse of nature "where force creates and increases" (VI, 31 W). Such opposition to love is but the disguise of the hatred which works in a course contrary to creative love. In "Oper und Drama" Wagner speaks in scathing terms of the false prudery that masks as sincerity. Discussing in symbols the fruitful and unfruitful relations of music and poetry, he compares the types of women who exhibit only the appearance of love. He condemns them all in contrast to the woman "who really loves, finds her virtue in her pride, her pride, however, in her sacrifice, in that sacrifice with which she surrenders not a portion of her being but her entire being in the richest fulness of its capacity. . . ." Of the types of women which he condemns, one is the undeveloped, wasted woman, given over only to general use. Another is the coquette excited by admiration, joy in herself, the satisfying of her vanity. She even delights in being loved so long as she is not called upon to love or to admire. "But there is another type of depraved woman, which fills us indeed with horror and repugnance; that is the prude . . . the woman whose virtue consists fundamentally in lovelessness. The prude is brought up according to the rules of propriety and, from youth up, has heard the word 'love' spoken only with timid confusion. . . . The power of her love is propriety, her only will the denial of love, which she knows in no other form than that of the courtesan or the coquette. Her virtue is the avoidance of vice, her achievement unfruitfulness, her soul impertinent pride. And how near is just this woman to the most loathsome downfall of all! In her bigotted heart love never arises, in her carefully covered flesh, however, is common sensuality."¹¹

It is given to the poet thus to discern the reverse side of that which appears righteous only to the narrower viewpoint of consciousness. The discoveries of psychoanalysis agree that the coverings of conscious morality all too frequently conceal even from the woman herself the truer nature of love. The unconscious contains that which belongs to all alike, not simply the evil desires to which love may turn, but the rightful need for love, which the self-seeking instinct permits to assume such actively or passively revolting forms. Wagner has recognized still further that the blasting of love arises indeed out of an intrinsic need for love. He has emphatically expressed fixation upon the past as the reason for the transformation of love into its

¹¹ III, "O.u.D.", pp. 317-319.

opposite, hate. He writes to Liszt of the passionate woman in *Lohengrin* whose poisoned arrows gave the mortal wound to Elsa's love and her faith in her lover: "Ortrud is a woman who—*does not know love*. This says it all, in truth, that which is most fearful. . . . There is a love in this woman, love to the past, to the generations gone, the horrible, insane love which is pride of ancestry, which can manifest itself only as hatred toward everything living, actually existing. In man such love would be laughable, but in the woman it is frightful because the woman, with her strong natural need for love—must love something, and the pride of ancestry, the dependence upon the past, becomes, therefore, murderous fanaticism. . . . She is a reactionary, one mindful only of that which is old and therefore hostilely minded toward everything new. In fact, in the most furious sense of the word, she would exterminate the world and nature merely to give life again to her moldering gods. Yet this is no caprice of a sick mood in Ortrud but this passion takes possession of her with the entire weight of a woman's longing for love, even if it is a longing stunted, undeveloped, objectless. . . ." Her character must be represented, the dramatist says, by one who can express the entire power of the fearful madness "which can be satisfied only through the destruction of others or—through her own destruction".¹²

So again we are indebted to the poet's psychological insight for a revelation of the contrasts which lie in the nature of life, if life is considered in its unconscious as well as its conscious phases. Psychoanalysis finds only in such contrasts the explanation of the embittering contradictions in the sentiments and actions of men and women. Love, we repeat, is life itself in reproductive activity. Therefore it cannot be absent wherever life itself exists, so that where this activity is turned away from constructive ends it becomes the agent of destructiveness no less surely under the guise of outward propriety than under openly accepted prostitution or in the form of more actively directed hate. Thus even such a woman as Fricka is her own enemy and that of the life about her. It produces in her a spirit of fretfulness that her husband fares forth out of the limits of her watchfulness. She dares not see that his transgressions are largely the result of her incapacity to share his creative urge.

To Fricka there is cause only for anxious dread in the spirit to whom Wotan has committed himself. Loge is the symbol of pure,

¹² *Br. IX, Teil I, pp. 153, 154 (Jan. 30, 1852).*

unguided creative power, flashing now here, now there his bright but uncertain flames. "Nature engenders and forms purposelessly"; the essence of the reproductive force is free, untrammelled activity. Wotan's other companions desire finished comfort. "Donner and Froh think of house and home", but Loge cannot be contained within any bounds (V, 222 R). He has been wandering "in deeps and heights" and has "ransacked in storm all the corners of the world" (V, 222, 225 R). He has found none that can dispense with woman and love save one only. At the cradle of childhood, the river Rhine, he heard of that strange denunciation of love made by "the Nibelung, Night-Alberich" (V, 225, 226 R). Loge apprehends the full significance of his own bondage if he continues to consort with the gods, who, in the presence of their new home, already are giving themselves over to the pomp of selfish power. "I am almost ashamed to be acting with them", sings Loge as the gods set foot upon the rainbow bridge to pass over to Walhall (V, 267 R).

The morality of Wagner's dramas has been questioned frequently yet it bears question only if merely the superficial action of the story is considered. Then it awakens facetious comment from the passing critic. Others are content to consider it merely as an echo of a distant age, the standards of which are not to be scrutinized too closely. The moral significance becomes a far more instructive matter, however, if the myth itself, as here, represents a true picture of the struggle of forces which assert a right of action theirs by nature and once accorded them by social custom. The myth then stands for the same conflict in each individual to-day in which the natural and ancient right of these forms of action strives for reappearance. For the unconscious, let us be reminded, consists of varying strata of human thought. Older levels of culture belonging to past ages retain their hold there to reassert themselves, as life's flux continues, in each new plane of cultural convention. Psychic life cannot be represented truly in the speech or the action which expresses the static order of any one social period nor through the mere presentation of a direct opposition to such order. Such simple virtue or villainy does not belong to the art whose goal is life itself. The true drama represents a wider interaction of forces, an interaction consisting sometimes in coöperation, sometimes in the opposition of these forces and often in a compromise adjustment between them. These are the currents that flow in the progress of life.

It is not the merely wanton plotter of mischief that assists Wotan in the attempt to secure the gold from the Nibelung. Loge, as the

creative force, can act only according to his nature. This, the free libido, lifts life, as occasion offers, from the nutritive-waste fetters that have bound it. The gold in the Rhine represented the elemental substance in its rightful place at the base of life. Greed dragged it along a path of craving for egotistic advantage. This substance must be regained from the thief and be restored to its original home. Loge promised to return the gold to the sorrowing maidens. Not he but Wotan rejects this demand of love's service and acts without regard for another's possession. "How should I help for the welfare of others?" asks Wotan, and again he questions, "The daughters of the Rhine, what has their counsel to do with me?" (V, 226, 229 R). The gold appeals to Wotan as the means for securing himself in his dream of power. He is seeking to rid himself of the pressing demands of the giants who built Walhall for him but with this Loge is not concerned. The function of his nature as the creative essence is not the preservation of that which is already obtained. He is willing to restore what has been lost just so far as this preserves the correct order of things. For only thus has creative activity a basis upon which to continue its work without interruption. If the god follows where Loge is not ashamed to lead, it must be when the elemental substance shall have been placed once more in its proper relation to life. The simple essence of the creative nature which is that of Loge is manifest in the almost naïve question with which Loge responds to the god's selfish design, "The Rhine daughters called thee; so they may hope to be heard?" (V, 233 R). This is not Wotan's intention. The god even dares not pass through the clear waters of the Rhine, the direct way which Loge would have gone, now that he shares in the evil which has sullied the innocence of childhood's possession. So Loge assents to the ill-smelling sulphur cleft, which is a more fitting passage to the realm of the Nibelung for the god who has exchanged high purpose for the ignoble quest of the gold (V, 233 R).

The creative force in its pure essence is undirected. It is unmoral, springing into action in whatever direction opportunity may present itself.¹³ Driven by the impulse of the moment, regardless of what

¹³ Cf. Meinck, "Loge (Loki)", *Bayreuther Blätter*, XIII, 1890, pp. 33-44, for a discussion of Loge's name and nature. Meinck reviews the possible derivations of the name from the root found in liuhan (lucere), lux, λευκός, lauhmuni, etc., and suggests the above interpretation in part, although he dwells more upon the superficial manifestations of Loge's personality as found in mythological lore. Cf. Wagner's reference to Loge as the good spirit with the right purpose regarding the gold, *Br.* XI, p. 36.

may lie beyond, its counsel may lead into what seem the ways of "cunning and trickery" or it follows as unconcernedly the path of purest service (V, 217 R). Loge has no voice but to go where Wotan bids him, "As thou commandest, I will lead thee gladly" (V, 233 R). Action is his delight, its end is not his concern. Creative force is a master whose power for action neither Wotan nor any one else can withstand. Its direction for good or for ill lies in the hands of the person whom it inspires. So Loge, its embodiment, the flickering Loge, the only one who perceives clearly the right of the child, because it lies in the path to which his nature belongs, Loge is powerless under the choice which the father makes. Loge alone conceives the right where all the others are blinded by their self-seeking, yet in the end he is able to give the wailing maidens nothing but the irony of sympathy, which calls forth laughter from the gods. Then the latter unfeelingly profit for the time through that which the evil desire of the father has made his own and which temporarily and superficially reflects the glory of his higher nature. The child's innocence destroyed, there is no hope for her future happiness unless some change in relation to the gold shall bring redemption. Through the voice of Loge, the reproductive spirit diverted to this mockery, Wotan answers the maidens' continued entreaties, "Hear what Wotan wishes of you. If the gold no more glitters for you maidens, sun yourselves happily hereafter in the new glory of the gods!" (V, 268 R).

It is not alone the daughter's life that has been overshadowed by the robbery of her innocent pleasure. The father, represented in the higher nature, has confused his egotistic desires with his true creative impulse so that he, too, has fallen under the curse. In the form of Alberich true love has been flung aside forever. The utterance of the hatred which possesses him is fearful from his mouth: "As through a curse it came to me, cursed be this ring! Its gold gave me—might without measure, now may its magic grant death to him—who wears it! No joyous one shall have joy of it, to no happy one may its bright glance laugh. Him who possesses it, let care destroy, and him who has it not, let envy gnaw! Let every one lust for what it can give, yet none be satisfied through its use; let its master hold it without return, yet may it bring the destroyer to him! Given over to death, let fear chain the cowardly one; so long as he lives, let him pant for it on to his death, lord of the ring as slave of the ring, till in my hand, that stolen I hold again! Thus—in misery deep the Nibelung blesseth his treasure.—Keep it now, guard it well; my

curse thou shalt not escape!" (V, 254, 255 R). And we hear him many years later, whispering in the night to the dreams of the son whom his evil lust has begotten, his son Hagen, "prematurely old, faded and wan", whom he has brought up to unyielding vindictiveness (VI, 209-212 G). He is filling these dreams of Hagen with words of hatred in order to destroy, if possible, that love which a wise woman gives to the Wälsung (VI, 211 G). But this love, even in death, has an invincible endurance of which Alberich's hatred cannot conceive.

Wotan has not flung himself unconditionally to the side of selfish destruction. He is in conflict now yet the time will come when he can speak resolutely of the redemption to be wrought through the hero, in union with the daughter set free from the father's desire. For the present fear and care harass him, for neither can he relinquish the exercise of love's creative right nor is he able to yield the nutritive power which his hands have secured. He dares not leave the goddess of light and of love forever in the hands of brutal might, yet he cannot rid himself of the craving roused in him by the seductive might of the magic gold. Reluctantly he submits to the external necessity of delivering the gold into the giants' hands only to be reminded at once, through their fateful quarrel, of its fearfully destructive might.

Such a conflict, the battle between the two fundamental instincts of life, bound as it is with the deepest claims of love, engages every fiber of the psychic nature. The battle rages sharply within the god between all that the ego demands for its own satisfaction and that other longing to break the bonds of self that life may pass on through others for the race to come, "Fearful now I find the curse's power! . . . How anguish still binds me! Care and fear fetter my thought" (V, 264, 265 R).

Another form of woman has arisen out of the utmost depths of existence. Wagner, symbolizing in "Oper und Drama" the perfect union of poetry and music, speaks there of the "eternal womanly" as the source of man's salvation out of his egoism. It is the deep mother element, he says, yet out of it, too, arises the individual woman. The poet dips to the deepest foundations of the sea of harmony. "Out of its lonely, fearfully wide mother house it has driven forth the woman to await the approach of the loved one. Now he sinks with his wedded one to become familiarly acquainted with the wonders of the deep."¹⁴ Here in the drama it is out of the "lonely and fear-

¹⁴ IV, "O.u.D.", pp. 102, 146, 147.

fully wide mother house" that the "eternal womanly" arises to admonish Wotan. Wotan has rejected the advice of his companions to surrender the ring to the giants, "Leave me in peace! I will not give up the ring" (V, 261 R). Erda, the "warning woman" appears before Wotan, "Yield, Wotan, yield! Flee the curse of the ring! Hopeless, to dark destruction, dooms thee its winning" (V, 261 R). The voice of Erda still further intones solemnly, "How everything was I know, how all comes to be, how all shall be, see I also. The primitive Wala of the eternal world, Erda, warns thy soul" (V, 261 R). Wotan, in his distress, longs to cling to this mother form, to submit like a child to her guidance.¹⁵ Erda is wiser than this. Hers is the true mother character which may permit her nothing but to be the source of a man's life to set him upon the path of self-conquest and self-attainment, "thou knowest enough; think with care and fear!" (V, 262 R). But the god cannot yet face his crisis alone. He cries out, his higher power shaken, as care and fear grip him, "how to end them, let Erda teach me; I must down to her!" (V, 265 R).

¹⁵ See the symbol of the earth [Erde] as mother in E. Lorenz, "Der Mythos der Erde", *Imago*, VIII, 1922, pp. 258-316.

CHAPTER V

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHILD'S FREEDOM

As the years pass Wotan has his way. He is unable to rest in the home built for him, he cannot conquer his anxious care. Unable to face reality alone he has gone back to the mother, "the primitive Wala of the eternal world", and compelled her to his will. He has won from her a representative to be his stay. A daughter has taken the mother's place for the father to lean upon. There are nine daughters, in fact, who shall live only to perform the father's service. The poet seems intuitively to have chosen from the unconscious a number which signifies that these daughters are the multiplied representatives of the mother whose aid Wotan desired. Dream analysis reveals the number nine, perhaps a reference to the months of intrauterine life, to be associated in the unconscious with a mother fixation.¹ It is significant of such an association also that the number nine figures so largely in the myths of the folk in regard to floods and the repeopling of the earth after flood.² Of these nine daughters born to Wotan from the primeval mother, Erda, one is closest to his will. Fearless, capable, wise, Brünnhilde combines the father's vigor of action with the mother's depths of wisdom.

The divinity that clothes the relation of Wotan and Brünnhilde is the warm reflection of an intensely human relationship. Brünnhilde is the happy child approaching early womanhood. Joyous youthful activity finds its delight in the wild freedom with which the mythical warrior maidens perform their duties, Brünnhilde and the sisters who share this activity. The father's house must be filled with the glory of the world's heroes. These must be urged to battle even, so that, falling, they may be gathered to the father's home (VI, 39 W). Here is not alone the unquestioning devotion to the parent's wish which is characteristic of the female child. The vigor which marks the Walküren, the sadistic exultation in the gathering of the heroes upon the battlefield, is significant of the maturing child.³ This is found in the riotous joy of the Walküren as they

¹ Jelliffe, *Tech. of Psa.*, p. 37.

² See Frazer, *Folk-lore*, I, pp. 146, 176, 177, 208, 291.

³ For sadism as a quality in normal development see Freud, *Three Contributions*, p. 21.

ride, it is heard in their cry. The girl is not yet a woman. In childhood the sex distinction has not been made entirely and finally so that masculine qualities are freely in evidence even in the female child. At the later period of childhood, furthermore, there appears a peculiarly active assertion of the masculine qualities. This seems to denote a protest against the more passive position soon to be assumed. Freud has called attention to the fact that an active, aggressive nature is the true birthright of every individual, male and female. The more passive feminine attitude in the female which must accompany later biological development and function is a thing to be learned by the maturing girl. As a child she rejoices in the same aggressive nature which more distinctively characterizes the male. As Freud says, "the libido is regularly and lawfully of a masculine nature, be it in the man or the woman . . ." ⁴

The woman unconsciously protests, therefore, against the necessity for repression of this earlier nature in favor of the feminine rôle to be assumed. The resistance is useful as a barrier against a too early surrender of her love but it may further prove itself stubbornly a barrier to love's demands. Apparently the more closely the child has been attached to the father in the earlier years, the stronger in her is this masculine defense against the new love. This in part is due to the overidealization of the father, an exaggeration of the permitted form which the childhood love has taken. It leads the child to assume the father's masculine nature in an attempt to identify herself with her ideal. But it also gives the father the exalted place as love's object. Then the adult hero to come is deemed hardly worthy to take his place. Sacred the virgin departed from Walhall, Brünnhilde later cries out to Siegfried. She protests that her awakening brings her shame and injury (VI, 170, 171 S). There is further value, nevertheless, in such defense. The maiden, before her surrender, must test the full worth of her own individuality as well as the valor of her lover. Only the freeborn Siegfried can press through the fire which envelops Brünnhilde's rock, while her warlike nature yields only before a persistent fearlessness such as his, "Oh, Siegfried, lordly one! . . . constrain me not with the crushing compelling! Destroy not thy beloved . . . Love thyself and turn from me . . ." (VI, 172, 173 S). Yet it is the very strength of her original nature which makes of Brünnhilde's final acquiescence an overwhelming flood, "If I am thine?—Oh Siegfried, Siegfried! Seest thou me not! As mine eyes burn upon thee, art thou not

⁴ Freud, *ibid.*, p. 79.

blinded? As mine arm presseth thee, dost thou not flame? As my blood raging streameth toward thee, its wild fire dost thou not feel?" (VI, 174 S). And yet again it is that indomitable force in its own independent strength, as in the everlasting quality of the love it has to offer, which ebbs and flows in its suffering. Stung to violence at its shameful betrayal, it can will the lover's death but it returns to the sacrifice of life itself in order to reunite with that lover in a last supreme union.

Here in Brünnhilde's girlhood this masculine vigor of nature provides against the more subtly dangerous attachment to the father, affording scope for the love in healthful activity. Yet it forms a reaction also, somewhat as a rebellious defiance, against the intervention of the mother. The mother is the natural sexual rival in the child's unconscious attachment to the father. The breaking up of the life story into the various figures of the drama has set Brünnhilde apart from her actual mother. The dramatic device has utilized a dream method for disposal of the rival parent which satisfies conscious censorship. Erda remains in the unexplored depths of existence. There, remote from the father's presence, she may exist for the daughter as a rival not to be feared, only to be revered as an honored memory. The daughter has succeeded to the place by the father's side. Here she can afford to cultivate generously the more positive elements of respect and affection with which the rivalry is intermingled. Yet the hostile side of the relation to the mother does not remain without representation in the drama. Yet here again, as far as concerns Brünnhilde, the advantage lies, for the time at least, with the daughter. Brünnhilde can well permit herself to make merry at her father's approaching discomfiture as Fricka draws near, "Hoyotoho! . . . I advise thee, Father, arm thyself. A hard storm shalt thou withstand; Fricka, thy spouse, is drawing nigh . . ." (VI, 23 W). Yet it is the hand of this unproductive wife, figuratively the jealous mother, which aids to direct the action of the curse across the daughter's path.

Sister rivalry for the father's love is not revealed among the Walküren. The more positive elements of feminine association are given the prominence. The opposite is perhaps faintly shadowed in the inability of the other sisters to enter helpfully into Brünnhilde's later experience, but in large measure the Walküren band form an extension of the free masculine force which belongs to the girl not yet mature. The sufficiency of one sex unto itself belongs as a natural stage in development. Association with the members of

one's own sex aids in the restraint of the current of heterosexual love against its premature outbreak. As it prevents its regressive return to the parent, it also delays attachment to another object of the other sex until adulthood has been fully established in every direction. It has its own service to render, furthermore, in preparing the personality for social relationships which shall give a broader background for the heterosexual reproductive life. Dangers also lie in this phase of development, the danger of retardation of the libido and diversion of it from the necessary valuation of the heterosexual relationship. These the drama does not pass unnoticed.

Brünnhilde alone of the sisters has conceived the deeper purpose that lies in life. She shares a "thought" with her father's inmost nature, a thought of which her sisters have remained quite unaware. Moreover, the sisters, multiplied forms of the protective side of the girl's nature, greet the idea that Brünnhilde should be given to a strange man as abhorrent. The father's threat to leave her upon the rock for whatever man "shall find her and waken her" raises in them a cry of horrified protest. They must leave her to a fate that they can neither share nor understand (VI, 74, 75 W). There comes a time still later when Brünnhilde must push from her all this defensive aspect of the woman's nature as it comes to tempt her back to the father's service. This is after Brünnhilde has passed through love's first ecstasy, with scarcely a thought yet of the tragedy which may lie even in this love. The sister Waltraute appears to remind Brünnhilde of the duty that she owes to Wotan and his endangered race. But Brünnhilde and Waltraute no longer speak the same language nor think the same thoughts. Waltraute is still the unchanged daughter of the childhood home, to whom Brünnhilde's new love is only a frenzy that has seized her. Brünnhilde, on her part, knows that the sister can have no comprehension of the love that streams to her through the ring, the lover's pledge.

In the early childhood companionship with one another, however, Brünnhilde and the sisters find affectionate adjustment in service to the parent. They exhibit that relationship of love of which, as we have found, Wagner has spoken, that inclination which arises out of a more fundamental love to develop into the family attachments between parents and children, brothers and sisters. Such a relationship has its service to render in the home, it grants delight in the mutual sharing of tasks with their pleasurable rewards. Yet these external permitted activities may strengthen the inner bond of forbidden sexual love. Neither father nor daughter in the uncon-

scious may be willing to sacrifice this that the child may pass on to the object of adult love. These external activities may keep the father and daughter so dependent upon one another, or the daughter so reliant upon her sisters, that progress is barred. Ripening womanhood is forced to break all these family ties in order to enter the wider racial service.

Brünnhilde is destined, in the poet's hand, to represent the woman who succeeds, though not without a severe struggle, in attaining the adult experience. The dangerous possibilities of the attachment of father and daughter pass first through still another form. Wagner's drama remains true to the mythological spirit which represents the psychic history of the folk. It sets forth, through the generations introduced, the gradual expansion of life by which inner ties are dissolved and family life extended. This has taken place racially and it must take place in the life of each individual. The individual life is an epitome of the history of the race.

Both racial and individual history, therefore, present a painful struggle against fixation within the family group with forbidden sexual attachment to a member of the family. Only thus is larger possibility secured for individual development and racial progress. The father in the family, the object, as has been seen, upon whom the daughter makes her first attachment, constitutes for her the object of fixation of the libido at the most unproductive level. He, therefore, for the woman, is the object against whom the incest barrier is strongest. Some way of escape must be found that the woman may attain the freedom of the reproductive life. The family itself provides the first object in the way of escape in the form of the brother. He is less close in relationship than the more dangerous father. He represents, even in conscious, external affairs, interests which more rightfully belong to the girl's own level of development. The libido may pass no further in its progress than to this new object still within the family, so that only a fresh danger shall have taken the place of the former one. Yet, on the other hand, the brother may serve as an object on the road over which the libido passes outward to the greater freedom beyond. Actual marriage between brothers and sisters seems to represent a stage in racial history on the way from the more primitive dominance of the daughters by the fathers to the wider union of sex partners entirely outside the family.⁵ In individual development the libido is found

⁵ Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, II, p. 541; *Golden Bough*, Pt. IV, "Adonis, Attis, Osiris", Vol. II, p. 214 ff. See also E. A. Wallis Budge,

to move along a similar pathway with greater or less attainment of freedom from the intervening brother object. Again we may turn to Wagner's life to realize how tenderly he clung to the earliest attachments to his sisters which marked his childhood.⁶ It may be that the deeper unconscious longing for the closer love between brother and sister formed the source of the pathetic beauty of the relation of Siegmund and Sieglinde, as their relation forms also a mythological echo of earlier racial customs.⁷ For here again the perplexing morality of Wagner's poem is based upon the unconscious of the folk. It represents both a forgotten racial occurrence and the remnant of such racial custom and of individual inclination which are retained within the secret depths of the unconscious wish.

The projection of inner psychic activity, which contains the struggle of two opposing tendencies, will always be manifested in two contrasting forms. Thus the forbidden desire is projected as an object of terror forced upon the individual from without. At the same time, the permitted elements of the love relationship assume a kindly form, pleasing to consciousness and forming a protection against the terrifying aspect of the hidden wish. The ambivalent father nature has been found already to have its representative objects in Alberich and Wotan. The dominance of the father, which compels the daughter through the unconscious wish, appears to Sieglinde in the haughty man to whose will she has no choice but to submit. Hunding "wooed a woman whom, unasked, robbers gave him for wife". But there comes to her also, early in the captivity of her marriage, even as she enters into its bondage, the kindly old man whose eye, so terrifying to others, awakens in her "tears and comfort alike". He comes to provide means for her later deliverance (VI, 14, 15 W).

Wotan has begotten for himself this other daughter, too. In the guise of Wälse he has wandered the world to procreate the brother and sister who are to accomplish his purpose. He entertains a vague hope that through this son and daughter he shall obtain again the ring. For the ring which Wotan had seized from Alberich he had been compelled, through Erda's solemn warning, to pay to the giants who built Walhall for him, though Wotan had attempted to

Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection, 2 vols., London, New York, 1911, I, pp. 28, 93.

⁶ *Br.* III, pp. 7 ff. (to Rosalie, Dec. 11, 1833), pp. 44 ff., 193 (to Cäcilie, April 21, 1842, Dec. 30, 1852).

⁷ Rank, *Inzest-Motiv*, pp. 642, 643.

deal treacherously that he might keep the ring. Now, if the Nibelung should once more obtain the ring, Wotan with all the gods would fall into his power. "Through Alberich's host the end threatens us . . . Only if he should ever win back the ring, then would Walhail be lost" (VI, 39, 40 W). Fafner, the surviving giant, having at once slain his brother in a quarrel over the ring, lies in the form of a dragon upon it and its hoard of golden products. Wotan dares not face him. There must be some other freer one to release the god from the web into which his lust for the gold has brought him, "Fafner guards the hoard . . . From him should I have to wrest the ring, even from him to whom I gave it as tribute; yet him with whom I made truce, him I dare not smite; powerless before him would be my valor" (VI, 40 W). Yet the son and the daughter, Siegmund and Sieglinde, shall be the instruments of a higher deliverance than this which the god desires, a deliverance not from the danger of loss of his ill-gotten power but from the degrading submission to such an ideal of power as an end in itself.

The many phases in which Wotan is presented dramatically reveal the many forms in which the psychic wish flows. They show also the conflict in which these wishes engage as the ego and the libido strive each to fulfil its own end. The twin pair, the expression of Wotan's desire to be accomplished through the male and the female child, who were to have served the purely selfish craving to obtain the gold once more without its penalty, become the avenue for the desire of the god's higher nature. Through them he may look forth into the future of a better race. Through them indirectly he is to accomplish finally that new purpose which he comes to will.

Yet the selfish desire extends its curse upon the better wish tendency. Wotan wanders through the forest with the son, training him for the part of the hero who, with the parent's strength, shall accomplish that against which the parent himself is bound. But the bondage of the parent effects also the prevention of the son's deed. Too much of Wotan's selfish participation lies in Siegmund's life. The father, in truth, is seeking only to impose his own will upon this son whom he has been preparing for heroic manhood. Fricka brings to the god a mocking reminder that he is bound with a bondage which he is forced to extend to the son, so that Wotan chides himself "I who through compacts am lord, to the compacts now am I slave" (VI, 32-36, 40 W).

Psychically Siegmund cannot be the hero to accomplish the deed of redemption from the curse for his place has been too close to the

father. His will is too narrowly hemmed in by the father's wish. That other freer, self-controlled hero must arise to perform the deed. Siegmund is too dear to the father as that father's own personal desire. "I touched Alberich's ring", that father cries in bitterness, "I greedily held the gold! . . . what I love I must leave, murder whatever I love, deceiving betray him who trusts in me!" (VI, 42 W). Even the sword which the father has prepared for this son shall prove ineffectual. Never may the father impose his will upon another only to be the representative of himself. The sword may be won by the hero's own might while it successfully resists the efforts of all those not endowed with the qualities derived from the father. But when the son attempts to use the sword its virtue is withdrawn. This son has based a false trust upon the power which was another's, not his own. In his later bitter disillusionment Siegmund is ready to draw the weapon against the woman he loves and the life that he in turn has begotten, "This sword . . . which cowardly betrays me before the foe,—if it avail not against the enemy, then let it avail toward the friend!" (VI, 54 W). Siegfried, on the other hand, the babe still unborn, is to arise free even from the presence of the father. He, untaught, shall forge the sword for himself. New and restored, to life he shall wake it again (VI, 122 S).

It is not alone the son who fails in true independence because his association with the father is too close. The woman, originally destined for her share in the great work of redemption, becomes more deeply involved in the bondage. For her bondage lies at the very core of life, in that fundamental sex love which Wagner has reminded us lies at the basis of family relationships. She must be removed further into the sphere of personal freedom where her reproductive libido may find scope. Actually and in part symbolically Sieglinde has been removed from the family home. Her separation from the brother is so complete that when they discover one another once more they meet as strangers. Their union, based though it may be upon the preservation of conscious and unconscious memories, still provides the opening of the way to the greater freedom where the redemption actually may be accomplished. Siegmund is stripped of his first feminine associates, "Early mother and maid disappeared from me" (VI, 7 W). Freedom is not yet so fully granted to the daughter. She is still to be lifted from the deeper level of bondage into which her nature has fallen. The son has escaped this. Once Siegmund has a vision, as it were, of the significant task before him

as regards the sister. As he passes through the forest he finds a maiden threatened with a marriage which shall be slavery to the family pride. The family group wish to marry her to the man without lover's love [Minne] (VI, 10 W). As Hunding's own kin, which Siegmund later finds them to be, they symbolize more closely the home in which Siegmund shall find the captive sister. The tyrannical representative of family fixation, the man chosen for the maid, is slain there in the forest by Siegmund and with him perish symbolically the infantile forms of brother and sister love. For the maiden, too, passes away lying upon the prostrate forms of her brothers. Now, when Siegmund and Sieglinde shall unite, after she is freed from Hunding, to whom Siegmund recounts this tale of events, the love of the twin pair shall be free to break open the way from family ties. Although they in themselves have been too long bound to the father to achieve the redemption of love, one in the father's protection, the other in an unfruitful marriage, yet it is given to them to set the really free hero upon this path. Nevertheless, they must be withdrawn first by death from this road.

The alternation of sorrow with Sieglinde's joy in her rescue from the loveless bondage follows dramatically upon the working of the curse of the ring. Psychically, too, it succeeds inevitably upon the deeper curse of which the greed for the gold is the symbol. The daughter, as the victim of the unconscious attachment, is bound to the gratification of her own and the parent's egotistic desires. The love is at the baser, nonproductive level. The daughter is a prey to the distress of her own conflict between the two levels of desire, one binding her deep within the unconscious, as externally she is in bondage to the superior might of the unloved man. "All that I have suffered in bitter sorrow, the pain I have felt in shame and disgrace", release from all this comes to her with an outpouring of joy (VI, 15 W). Outlawed the son, dishonored the daughter, they unite in the salvation of one another (VI, 16 W). The door into the free world opens wide. "Winter storms have yielded to the joyous May, in tender light shineth the spring; . . . out of its warm blood arise the blossoms of joy . . . Love leads on the spring . . . (VI, 16, 17 W).

Not even the ecstasy of love, however, can efface at once the disgrace of the sister's former bondage. She does not share the same sense of dishonor which arouses Fricka, servant of outward propriety, to wrathful storm. Sieglinde has to face a stain of a far deeper nature. Why should Fricka espouse this marriage of Hunding

to the unwilling Sieglinde? Only the unconscious phases of Fricka's loveless adherence to convention, to the nature of which Wagner has given expression in the passages already quoted, can explain her attitude. It is that hollow propriety which bases itself, as does Ortrud's more violent hate, upon the "moldering gods" of the past to bind itself in the bonds of a marriage without love. It dismisses all thought of real love, its virtue being absence of love. By such means it changes the incest character of the fixation over into a nutritive association blindly extolled by society. The prostitution of love, upon which such an attitude unconsciously is based, permits the marriage for house and home, for visible support, but concerns itself little that its oath unites the unloving (VI, 26 W). Its outrage is only that such an oath is disregarded and the gifts of home and name in which the ego took pride are set at naught.

Sieglinde's suffering is of a different nature. Her shame lies in the fact of having kept such an oath, not in the following of the path which opens into the freedom of life. Her concern is for the sin which she has committed against life and love themselves. It was living love that wakened her to the full measure of her ignominy. It is not with the rapture of love that she reappears in Siegmund's care but in the terror of revelation which their love has brought her: "Away, away, flee from the polluted one! Unholy mine arm embraces thee. Dishonored, profaned, this body has vanished; flee the corpse, let it alone! May the winds blow her away who without honor gave herself to the noble one!—When he loving embraced her, when most blessed delight she found, when completely loved by the man, who wakened all love within her—before the sweetest bliss of holiest consecration, which filled all her sense and her soul, horror and shuddering, for hideous shame, with terror, could but seize the dishonored one, who submitted to the man who held her without love!—Leave the accursed one, let her flee thee!—Outcast am I, of nothing worth! Thee, purest of men, must I escape, to thee, noble one, may I never belong. Shame I bring to my brother, disgrace to my wooing friend!

Hinweg! hinweg!
 flieh' die Entweihte!
 Unheil'ig
 umfasst dich mein Arm;
 entehrt, geschändet
 schwand dieser Leib:

flieh' die Leiche,
 lasse sie los!
 Der Wind mag sie verweh'n,
 die ehrlos dem Edlen sich gab!—
 Da er sie liebend umfing,
 da seligste Lust sie fand,
 da ganz sie minnte der Mann,
 der ganz ihr Minne geweckt—
 vor der süssesten Wonne
 heiligster Weihe,
 die ganz ihre Sinne
 und Seele durchdrang,
 Grauen und Schauer
 ob grässlichster Schande
 musste mit Schreck
 die Schmähliche fassen,
 die je dem Manne gehorcht,
 der ohne Minne sie hielt!—
 Lass' die Verfluchte,
 lass' sie dich flieh'n!—
 Verworfen bin ich,
 der Würde bar!
 Dir reinstem Manne
 muss ich entrinnen;
 dir herrlichen darf ich
 nimmer gehören:
 Schande bring ich dem Bruder,
 Schmach dem freunden Freund!" (VI, 46, 47 W).

Then in a frenzy, laughing like a mad woman, she pictures to herself the baying of Hunding's hounds and the gnashing of the teeth of the dogs after their prey. With the healing return of the consciousness of love, she calls upon Siegmund to oppose them valiantly with his sword.

We hear Sieglinde again in her sleep into which she has fallen exhausted at Siegmund's feet. Her dream lingers in the pleasant places of childhood, then suddenly it has recalled those past events when the evil first appeared: "That the father would now return home! With the boy he tarries still in the forest. Mother, Mother! my spirit is troubled,—these strangers look not friendly and peaceable!—Black mists, stifling vapors, fiery flames leap along after us,

the home is burning. Help, brother! Siegmund, Siegmund, . . . Siegmund! Ha!" (VI, 55, 56 W). It is a dream in which the change of pleasurable memory to accumulation of anxiety, with the vividness of imagery, reveals once more the poet's intuitive skill in faithful representation of the content and mechanisms of the unconscious conflicts.

Sieglinde awakens from her dream to find Siegmund gone from her. He has left her to fight his last battle with his father and hers, a battle which takes on a double aspect from the two forms of the obstacle that stands in the children's way. So long as Siegmund trusts in Wotan's sword he is still in the power of the egotistic desire of the father. This latter Hunding more completely symbolizes. Psychically Hunding is inevitably Siegmund's slayer but with equal psychological truth the father who represents the progressive libido, even he is bound, in the conquest of his own ego, to will his son's death. Yet this better father nature may now take the son's part after the death of the son, which wipes out the evil desire, has been accomplished. Now Wotan may turn in wrathful scorn to the enemy who has boasted Fricka's protection, "Go hither, slave! Kneel before Fricka, tell her that Wotan's spear avenges what mockery has gained her. Go, go!" and with a mere motion of the hand that holds the spear he strikes Hunding to earth (VI, 57 W).

But Wotan is in wrath against his own children. Yet, while he may think to banish Sieglinde forever from his presence, it is she herself who has a last sacrifice to make. She must sever her dependence upon the past that she may be the mother of the child who is free. To grant him the unhindered freedom which shall give him full possession of his own course of life she must depart to the far eastern forest where Wotan dares not come. It lies for him too near the dreaded Nibelungen brood and that giant dragon under whose deathly weight the heap of evil treasure is stored. There at the very center of the evil of life, again deep down at the foundation, where evil or good may arise, life for the hero must begin. He, starting pure, shall escape the contamination of desire for the gold. To him it will appear once more innocent of temptation as so long ago to the daughters of the Rhine. It will be to him only a thing of passing interest. There in the Nibelungen cave, therefore, the mother must bear him and die, leaving him no more than faint, far phantasies of mother love and the evidences of the father's shattered power.

CHAPTER VI

THE DAUGHTER'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

The father and daughter shall meet now in their psychic conflict upon the equal terms of reality. The time has come when each must follow his or her own path. Brünnhilde has been brought face to face with those deeper currents which change the hitherto happy life of childhood. Woman's love shall come to perfect fruit in her and still that perfection will be marred. Her love must suffer hurt and be redeemed only through the supreme sacrifice, death. For love is never perfectly free. Life's fulness may lie in love's unrestrained activity. Yet always there is the disturbance wrought by the crossing of the ego desires. The freest aspirations of love are strengthened by such opposition. They gain momentum from the constantly alternating action between the currents of the ego and of the libido. For psychic life, like physical phenomena, rests upon the opposition of tendencies. Yet the contest is not an even one, so that love may emerge sorely wounded from the toils which selfish desire fastens upon it.

The father's desire and the daughter's own inclination in the unconscious may have woven themselves into a net wide and intricate and difficult to resolve. Out of this the libido struggles, wins its way, perhaps falls again at least into partial bondage. The fibers weave themselves about the trustfulness of the child, which unites with the proud strength of the woman to rejoice that the will of the father is her own, "Father, Father! . . . how does thy care affright thy child! Confide in me, I am true to thee. See, Brünnhilde entreats! . . . To Wotan's will dost thou speak, tell me what thou wilt. Who—am I, if not thy will?" (VI, 36, 37 W). Yet Wotan has taught this daughter something else as he has contended for the freedom of love. She is to pass on to a purpose in opposition to this will of the father. The two tendencies within Wotan are in conflict, "In everything that I effect, to my disgust, I find only myself! That other thing that I desire, that other thing I never attain. For the free man must create himself.—Slaves only I form for myself!" (VI, 41 W).¹

¹ Literally "Slaves only I knead for myself!" Does Wotan confess the childishly futile character of his power? Cf. Frazer, *Folk-lore*, I, pp. 11 ff.

The other conception of life which Wotan has presented to Brünnhilde has been so far only an undefined "thought". Her answer to the god reveals an awakening to its meaning. She has reached a turning point in her development, "Yet the Wälsung, Siegmund, does he not act for himself?" (VI, 41 W). Brünnhilde is brought through Siegmund to consider a meaning to life such as had never clearly confronted her in the period of carefree activity for the father. It is when she stands before Siegmund to bring him the father's message that this first awakening comes to her. She pictures to him in exalted tones the glories and the delights of the father's proud halls, to which she has been sent to summon Siegmund. But what is his answer? "Where Sieglinde lives in joy and sorrow, there Siegmund too will tarry . . . must I then fall, I will not go to Walhall . . ." (VI, 51, 52 W). Brünnhilde is shaken. She is awed by something which she has not considered before, "So little dost thou think of eternal bliss? That poor woman is everything to thee, who, weary and full of sorrow, hangs weak upon thy lap? Nothing else thou holdest worthy of honor?" (VI, 53 W). Then arises the overwhelming pity of love, which sweeps away all obedience to the father's former authority as Brünnhilde determines to defy his command.

Her period of unquestioning obedience is over. The father's thought of protective advantage to himself can no longer be hers. She cannot even share that last conflict of his when, at the end, he shall await the fulfilment of the purpose he has at last willed, the yielding of the world to a new race. Each one must tread the way of the libido's victory alone. The great "thought" which she shares with the father, what is it but the reproductive desire itself, the choice of the libido whose goal is only the ever renewed one of endlessly changing creation? But this thought henceforth must be her own, no longer the father's. It must be interpreted as her own life's experience shall teach her. All that wisdom which her father has taught her, the magic runes of life and love, came to her in her early association with him. Such wisdom comes, too, out of that deep nature of the mother, Erda, which it is Brünnhilde's to carry forward as the eternal womanly proceeding from generation to generation. Yet this wisdom, as the possession from the father and the

et al. for primitive conception of creation out of kneaded clay; *Golden Bough*, Part IV, "Adonis, Attis, Osiris", Vol. I, pp. 102-105, for conception of birth through taking of food or through mud; *Freud, Introd. to Psa.*, pp. 272-275, for infantile theory of birth from food or feces.

mother, belongs to the past. As such it must be laid aside to be received again only as the daughter herself shall find it.

We hear her singing to Siegfried in the after-triumph of their love, when her thought is full of the lover's deeds, "What the gods taught me I gave to thee, the rich treasure of the sacred runes . . . Bare of knowledge—but with wish fulfilled" (VI, 183 G). Before her surrender, however, she still faces fearfully the exchange of the god-given knowledge for the knowing of a reality still untried, "My senses are reeling, my knowledge grows silent; shall wisdom then vanish from me?" (VI, 171 S). At first she sees the new love as a thing afar although the lover is at hand. Proud of her awakening at his bidding, she is still unaware of the extent of love's demands. Then she sings in the exalted possession of life's knowledge and with an unconscious prophecy of love's surrender: "What thou dost not know, that know I for thee, yet I know, only—because I love thee.—O Siegfried, Siegfried, conquering light! I have loved thee forever, for to me alone stood clear the thought of Wotan. The thought which never I dared name; which I could not think but only felt; for which I fought, battled and strove; for which I defied him who thought it; for which I atoned, punishment bound me, because I ne'er thought it and only felt! For the thought—darest thou solve it—to me it was only love for thee.

Was du nicht weisst
weiss ich für dich:
doch wissend bin ich
nur—weil ich dich liebe.—

O Siegfried! Siegfried!
Siegendes Licht!
Dich liebt' ich immer:
denn mir allein
erdünkte Wotan's Gedanke.
Der Gedanke, den nie
ich nennen durfte;
den ich nicht dachte,
sondern nur fühlte;
für den ich focht,
kämpfte und stritt;
für den ich trotzte
dem, der ihn dachte;
für den ich büsste,

Strafe mich band,
 weil ich nicht ihn dachte
 und nur empfand!
 Denn der Gedanke—
 dürftest du's lösen!—
 mir war er nur Liebe zu dir." (VI, 168 S).

This is a passage profoundly beautiful in its description of the transition of the love of the girl to that of womanhood. The new impulses rising from the depths of the unconscious intuition of love may be only timidly accepted by consciousness, yet the unconscious triumphs as they burst forth in an acknowledgment of love before which mere understanding must be silent. The child rears a lofty ideal of love upon the father's tenderness and revered wisdom. The unconscious of the child recognizes that within the father's experiences there are mysteries of love to which the child, as his daughter, may not approach. These her idealization of him must conceal from her clear conscious perception. Such love must come to her clearly only apart from the father. To Brünnhilde the father is divine and she is the daughter of a god. The new conception to come to her is of a humbler love though stronger in its human reality. She can come to a full realization of this only through a severe conflict waged in her own breast. Such real adult love is to be known clearly only when she shall have bid defiance to the object of her early adoration, when, finally, with her acquiescence, this father himself shall have kissed the godhead from her eyes (VI, 84 W).

Through such a path Brünnhilde passes. Only slowly, reluctantly, does she tread such a way before she can sing of this love to her waiting lover. Even with the clearer enlightenment that comes through her surrender to him, there is still a dark road to the knowledge of the fullest sacrificial and regenerating power of love. Brünnhilde later stands at the end of this dark path crying to the god whose desire early wrought evil into her love's course, "Do I know what now avails thee?" (VI, 253 G). Her deed of final surrender even to love's mistakes, to the wounds she has been made to suffer, brings at that hour the peace of full knowledge. She is ready then to follow her lover into death, to permit the redemption, through a new creation, from the curse which the father's selfishness has put upon love. Then she can sing, "All, all! All I know, all is now clear to me . . . Rest, rest, thou god!" (VI, 253 G).

We see her still at the beginning of this journey into the knowl-

edge of love. Already the child's instinct proves itself truer to reality than that of the father. She is at the outset of life while he has grown worldly wise, sunken in the curse of his own desire. Her reproductive life is at the bud, while he, his creative forces waning, seizes after those advantages through which, vainly, he would stay their end. This waning of his power is the personal ground of hostility toward his own son, although he has reared him exactly for that freedom of which the father now robs him. On this ground, too, the father clings to the daughter. She must not defy his will. Even the questioning of that will on the part of her who has always obeyed him rouses a fury of wrath against her. Presumptuously Wotan asserts his possession of her: "What art thou but blindly to choose my will? Since I have counseled with thee, have I sunk so deep that I am affronted by mine own creature? Knowest thou, child, mine anger? . . . In my bosom have I hidden the fury which shall cast a world into horror and confusion that once laughed in pleasure to me;—woe to him whom it strikes! His defiance will bring him grief!—Therefore I advise thee, rouse me not, have a care for what I have commanded. Siegmund shall fall! Let this be the work of the Walküre!" (VI, 44, 45 W).

The duties that once were light grow heavy when the child finds herself in this sore strife with the object of her former affection. Unseen cords of bondage lying within the tender devotion to the will of the parent sap the vigor from many an individual life. The daily tasks become a burden as one is forced to carry them when the original incentive is brought into question. Brünnhilde may no longer go about her activities with the old buoyancy that arose out of her former obedience. Return to the authority of the father would mean death to the newly arising independence. The old attachment makes it no easy task to refuse to obey, yet the new call is asserting itself against the former habit of obedience, "Heavy weighs the weight of my weapons. How light they were when I battled for pleasure! To evil conflict creep I to-day with dread!" (VI, 45 W). Obedience to the father is no longer a wholehearted one. The rising tide of pity, born of the new realization of the power of love, as she witnesses this in Siegmund, brings Brünnhilde to her ultimate decision. She makes her choice to throw in her lot with the son, to save him if possible from the father's determined destruction.

It is too late, however, to stem the father's wrath. His spear shatters the sword once destined to win victory for the son. Then the storm breaks upon the daughter's head. The love of her own

sex proves one last refuge for the girl driven within and without. The anger of Wotan is again a symbolic projection of the child's terror of her own inner attachment to the parent. His anger is the sign of the sharpness of the conflict raging within each one in regard to the other. Inwardly the woman's nature seeks relief in that safer love between the sisters, while outwardly, too, the sisters serve as a partial wall against the oncoming fury of the father.

The new scene opens before Brünnhilde's appearance among the sisters. It rings with the exultant shouts of their still carefree occupation. The Walküren form a background of keen remembrance of the childhood joys from which Brünnhilde voluntarily has withdrawn. The sisters are ignorant of all that has transpired to change the world for Brünnhilde. Merrily they banter one another upon the experiences of their last ride to battle, with the good-natured rivalry of those whom no care divides. Only they miss from their number that other sister without whom they would not dare to return to the father. She appears suddenly with an unheard of greeting, "For the first time I am in flight and am pursued! War-father is hard upon me!" (VI, 63 W).

Brünnhilde has identified herself, by her step toward freedom, with that other daughter figure of sorrow in whom the unconscious bondage broke too late for more than a fleeting joy. Brünnhilde has borne Sieglinde upon her saddle from the scene of Siegmund's death. Now she supports Sieglinde and leads her forward among the Walküren. Sieglinde is frozen with horror but she quickens once more to life at the whisper of the child to be hers. Wagner again gives expression to the endless continuity of the psychic life. He reveals through the interweaving of the musical themes and the poetic situations, with their development one out of another, the interplay of elements belonging to many forms and many stages of psychic activity. These are found not alone in the external divisions which belong to time and space but in the association of thought and emotion which run backward through memory and forward upon the currents of desire. All this becomes confusedly complicated. For such is the psychic life. It is thus that the daughter becomes the mother and the sister finds her escape through the brother, even while, through him, she maintains connection with the origin of her life. Thus, too, Brünnhilde becomes the link between the past and the future, later to take the place of bride to the son, whose mother this earlier sister-bride is to become.

Brünnhilde herself is at first only the maiden touched with the

dawning knowledge of that love that counts death but a step in its living activity. Yet she is better able than the fainting mother to project into the future the realization of the fruit of Sieglinde's love. Hardly may she yet perceive that this son is the object of her future love, who shall set her free forever from the past and for whom now she must be severed from the protective glory of the father whom she has served. Yet, awakened at last by him, Siegfried grown to manhood, she takes up at once the thought which at present she may only feel. Already she is able to name the unborn child but only as she stands before him, the fullgrown hero, can she sing of the identity of her love with that of the mother: "Oh wouldst thou know, joy of the world, how I have loved thee ever! Thou wast my thought, thou wast my care! Thee tender I nourished, before thou wast conceived; before thou wast born, my shield protected thee. So long have I loved thee, Siegfried!"

O wüsstest du, Lust der Welt,
wie ich dich je geliebt!
Du war'st mein Sinnen,
mein Sorgen du!
Dich zarten nährt' ich,
noch eh' du gezeugt;
noch eh' du geboren
barg dich mein Schild:
so lang' lieb' ich dich, Siegfried!" (VI, 167 S).

It is a song which brings the response from the lover as from one still hesitating between the shadowy mother form of the past and the reality of the woman before him, "Did my mother then not die? The lovely one only slept?" (VI, 167 S).

Life tarries, nevertheless, in each one of its special forms until that individual shall have tested his or her own capacities for all the experiences that life can bring. Only thus, apparently, does life obtain those new values which enrich its future. So Brünnhilde has to discover for herself the height and the depth of the meaning of life. We have seen the first darkening of the child's life of simply direct pleasures. We have witnessed in Sieglinde the crushing weight of bondage to the father's dominance, a bondage which consciousness can only abhor. In Sieglinde also is revealed the partial attainment of freedom as the way of progress presents itself at first through the brother. She courageously enters the path of lonely motherhood ending in death, that a freer way may open for her son.

Brünnhilde still has to tread the way out of bondage that leads through severe conflict at first and afterward through the tragedy which evil desire works upon love. She, as the type of full womanhood, reveals how imperfect the richest path of love must be because of the desires which the unconscious nurtures. Wagner repels our dramatic interest by no perfected types of womanhood or no smoothly flowing events. He too well represents human life with its range of conflicting emotions which create the experiences through which Brünnhilde passes.

For a moment she takes refuge among her sisters, "Protect me sisters, shield this woman!" (VI, 64 W). Her appeal is to an understanding and a courage which are not theirs, "Deluded sister, what hast thou done? . . . Disobedient, has Brünnhilde broken War-father's sacred command?" (VI, 65 W). Brünnhilde's concern is for the mother and the unborn child, no longer for her father. Her obedience has been given to the voice of the future, a voice which the sisters do not hear. They are unmoved when Sieglinde's prayer for death turns to joyous pleading for help to save the life she bears. The thunder, warning sound of the father's wrathful approach, stirs them to answer, "None of the Walküren dares her protection" (VI, 67 W).

Instinctively Sieglinde turns to Brünnhilde, who alone has the vision which looks beyond this barrier of filial obedience. Only Brünnhilde dares send Sieglinde upon her lonely way to the horrid wood. The others are inspired with childish fear as with childish docility. The wood to them is an unthinkable spot, "It is not wholesome there for a helpless woman" (VI, 68 W). Brünnhilde already apprehends the rewards of love that follow the hardships and the uncertainties upon the road of reality, "With brave defiance all weariness bear—hunger and thirst, thorn and stone; laugh when trouble and sorrow oppress thee! For one thing know and think of it ever, the noblest hero of the world is growing, O woman, in thy sheltering womb!" (VI, 69 W). For she and Sieglinde are one now in the love that dares all things in the racial mission to which it has given its devotion. So the latter departs, illumined with joy, the sword fragments in her hand, "For him whom we loved, I will save the most precious one. Sometime may the reward of my thanks laugh for thee! Farewell, Sieglinde's woe shall be thy blessing!" (VI, 69 W).

The weary way of her own conflict is before Brünnhilde. In vain do the sisters seek to soften the father's anger. Their words

only serve to remind him of the hurt his love has received. The daughter who has defied him is she whom his self-will had created for its own glory. He had conceived a justification of that will in her service to him. This child, his own, has asserted a will at variance with this wish of his, even though her will conforms to that higher purpose to which his better nature later returns. For the present his anger feeds upon a recital of the gifts which she has set at defiance. Like many a parent he finds only his own attributes mirrored in his child. Her possessions are not for her independent use but only gifts which should bind her to her father's wish. Hence his fury. "No one as she knew my innermost aim; no one as she knew the source of my will; she herself was the forming womb for my wish.—Thus now she has broken the blessed bond, that faithless my will she's defied, my bidding supreme she has openly scorned, against me, even me, the weapon she's turned, which alone my wish for her formed!—Hearest thou, Brünnhilde, thou to whom byrnie, helmet and ward I lent, blessing and favor, name and life?" (VI, 71, 72 W).

It is no longer fitting that Brünnhilde should seek protection among the companions of her childhood. With "humble yet firm step" she appears, a woman, before the father, "Here I am, Father, give the punishment!" (VI, 72 W). The words with which the father answers her to cast her from him are more significant than he perceives. The angry sorrow to which her disobedience has brought him forces him to the truest challenge that the older generation may present to the younger one. It is indeed true that the punishment for the child lies outside the parent's hand. Entrance upon the path of adult choice brings its own penalty out of which comes also its own reward. The child has stepped irrevocably outside the protection that once preserved her from the difficulties of reality. It is this endangering of the child's ego as well as the hurt to the pride of the parent that torments the parent with the unnamed horrors of the way. All that lies before is viewed in unfavorable comparison with that which has been known. All that Brünnhilde was and had, Wotan reminds her, just these things she no longer is, no longer has. Her way, self-chosen, lies in her own hands, "What . . . thou wast, that Wotan has told thee. What now thou wilt be, that tell thyself! Wish-maid thou art no longer; Walküre thou hast been.—Now henceforth be whatever thou wilt be!" (VI, 72, 73 W). Wotan pictures the more intimate terms of the life of close association which the Walküre has had with him as she rode forth from

Walhall's halls and returning ministered to his personal needs. For the moment this only increases the fury of the storm of his indignation that breaks upon her.

The unconscious, forbidden love of parent and child is based upon the exaggerated valuation of pleasure and its opposite pain. It is prone, therefore, to blind adoration on the one hand or, disappointed, to the opposite extreme. For the time at least there is hatred of the object which before had been loved with extravagant love. This extravagance of feeling passes over into cruel anger and even to a sensual unrestraint of passionate phantasy. Such an unconscious reaction breaks forth from Wotan as his love is swept on into hatred because of Brünnhilde's continued opposition to his will. Swayed by this hatred he condemns this best beloved daughter to the shameful lot of possession by any one whom chance may bring. It is not enough that the father shall strip from her his own divinity but she shall lie along the common way to be awakened by him who shall pass by, "In defenseless sleep will I enclose thee. The man then seize the maid who, by the way, finds and wakens her" (VI, 74 W).

The situation, which dramatically is presented in Wotan's words, psychologically expresses the double phase of the unconscious thought both of father and daughter. The degradation in contrast to the exalted divinity of the past represents the extreme form in which both perceive the unconscious desire of parent and child for one another in its completely unrestrained measure. Its abhorrent aspect, which this unconscious wish must wear to consciousness, presents it as a punishment. In this manner there is granted one of those frequent compromise formations where the unconscious wish may be active in phantasy and yet at the same time be condemned by consciousness. Brünnhilde's divinity is an evidence also of the unconscious wish, often consciously expressed in childhood, that the child shall prove to be of higher birth than reality attests. The myth, the phantasy product of the folk, has made much of the arriving of the child at the long withheld knowledge that it is of a royal or a divine parentage far above the actual parents that the child has known.² The child who exchanges phantasy for the facts of the real world must accept its heritage as from common humanity, neither from royalty nor from parentage in the godhead itself. Wotan's threat repeats the unconscious reluctance of the child to find herself like

² See Rank, *Myth of Birth of Hero*, where the myths revealing this phantasy are collected and interpreted according to this significance; pp. 61 ff. esp. for the interpretation.

other women, sitting at the hearth at the common task of spinning. The timidity of the child, supported by its unreal desires, can conceive this only as a position at which all will sport with cruel jest. Thus Wotan pictures Brünnhilde's debasement, ". . . at the hearth she will sit and spin, the goal and the game of all mockers" (VI, 75 W). The threat of the domination of the unknown man is terrifying also because the child in phantasy models the future relationship upon that unequal relationship which it has known with the parent, viewing this in the new relationship in an adverse form. As with Sieglinde, the domination becomes an abhorrent one. Wotan voices this now as he mockingly contrasts the days when Brünnhilde rode free through the air with the abject subservience which he foresees for her. "Heard ye not," he cries to her protesting sisters, "what I inflicted? Out from your band is the faithless sister driven; with you to horse no more will she ride through the air; the maidenly bloom will fail the maid, a husband shall win her womanly favor, the mastering man she will henceforth obey . . ." (VI, 74 W).

Brünnhilde in reality rises above these base tortures of phantasy. She has exchanged the extremes of the principle of pleasure and pain for obedience to the principle of reality. The father's picture of dishonorable surrender of her position in the divine family has brought the daughter with a wild outcry to his feet. Now she rises slowly to assume the guidance of her own thought. She faces her father with the question of the actual merit or demerit of her deed. She reminds him that she was but carrying to fulfilment that better thought of his. The father and daughter are one in that most fundamental purpose of the reproductive instinct not in the sinful union of unproductive pleasure. Yet this oneness of the deeper purpose must be fulfilled henceforth upon separate pathways. Only thus, through the new individuality of each generation, can such purpose be continued unbroken through the race.

Brünnhilde asserts the interference of that selfish love which, in Fricka, had lost all incentive to reproductive deeds. It is woman in this form, become a travesty of the true mother spirit of creation, who has checked the action of Wotan's better will. Brünnhilde knows that through Fricka Wotan has become a foe to himself, ". . . Fricka estranged thine own purpose from thee; when to her wish thou joinedst thyself, a foe to thyself didst thou become" (VI, 76 W). So much wisdom, the knowledge of the better purpose, Brünnhilde avows as her own: "Not wise am I, yet I know the one thing—that thou didst love the Wälsung. I knew the dissension

that forced thee completely to forget this one thing . . . She who watched behind Wotan in the strife, she saw only that which thou didst not see,—Siegmund I was compelled to see . . . Awed and astounded I stood in shame, only to serve him was all I could think. Victory or death to share with Siegmund—this only could I choose as my lot! Him who breathed this love into my heart, this will that joined me with the Wälsung, close in its confidence—thy command I defied" (VI, 76-78 W).³

Wotan's answer bears the reproof with which the unconscious desire of the parent greets the child's newly won recognition of love. The painful jealousy of the passing generation resents the independent action of the libido rising in those whom it has had in its keeping, "There wast thou laved with blissful delight, didst thou laughing drink of love steeped in its bliss, filled with its frenzy, while the sorrow of the god mixed biting gall for me?" (VI, 79 W). Yet the child is following only the inevitable path of love which the parent himself had found. She has only loved what he loved; wherein then lies the offense? Again she begs that the father will not give her to the cowardly man and Wotan, in his anger, once more speaks inescapable truth, "Thou hast departed from War-father—he may not choose for thee" (VI, 80 W). The father must cast from his thought even the son of the Wälsung if the latter is to be Brünnhilde's lover. The continuity of life presents an unbroken connection between the former object of love and the one yet to be born. Hence psychologically the relation between Wotan and Siegfried. Yet this love must arise without the intervention of the god just as the broken sword awaits reconstruction at the untaught hands of the boy. "Do not seek of me protection for the woman," cries Wotan, "nor for the fruit of her womb! . . . Do not strive, O maid, to disturb my will! Take thy lot as it is cast for thee; I cannot choose it for thee!—Yet I must go forth now, withdraw far from thee. I have already tarried here too long" (VI, 81 W).

From this time forth Wotan shall maintain only a shadowy existence until the will which he shall have accepted is finally fulfilled, the end of his race that a new one may arise. The Wanderer is but the memory of the powerfully divine father whose presence once filled the daughter's life. It is a memory strong enough to arise

³ The vacillation in Brünnhilde's address between the pronouns of the first, second and third persons reveals the struggle within her to view the situation with the new objectivity which has arisen in the face of the former association.

once and again, as personified in the Wanderer's form, in opposition to the object of the daughter's future love or more generously to further love's design. Yet the past love lives also in a less concrete form as the curse of the egotistic desire whose fateful work is not yet finished. Meanwhile the child must pass through one more act of withdrawal from the past. A figurative death to denote transition to a higher plane of life is a favorite device of the dream. Wagner has borrowed such a psychic mechanism in the form of a familiar mythological and fairy tale motive, present also in the Icelandic saga.⁴ Brünnhilde's final surrender of childhood to emerge into the maturity of womanhood takes place through the magic slumber. There is a compromise here, too, between the two forms of desire. The slumber is symbolic of the prevalence of phantasy in the life of the child at the age of puberty. The reality of adulthood which confronts the child at this period is mitigated but also endangered by the readiness to regress through day dreams to the cravings of child love. Such cravings are activated by the oncoming maturity of the sexual life but they represent also the revival of the childish phases of it buried in the unconscious, which the personality only reluctantly forsakes.

Thus Brünnhilde's sleep is a return for a time to the phantasies which preserve the past and from which the full awakening will not come without a struggle. At the same time it is a sleep which permits a rebirth of the unconscious longings over into the new atmosphere of adult reality. It is a return of the eternal womanly in Brünnhilde to that deep realm where the mother has long slumbered and out of which the latter henceforth shall be called only to be banished again forever. (See VI, 152-155 S). The daughter sleeps to awaken. The father's kiss closes her eyes as her consciousness is hushed into forgetfulness of the world she has known and the vain striving with this early object of her love is stilled. Before she slumbers she senses instinctively something of the active forces of the reality to which she will awaken. "Let a fire burn at thy command", she begs, "let glowing flame surround the rock, let its tongue lap and its tooth devour the cowardly one who, presumptuous, should dare to approach the raging rock!" (VI, 82 W). There is a note of the strong masculine nature of the Walküre in this picture of her own defense. It is that active quality which enriches the love of Brünnhilde but which also makes a barrier to her love and which one day turns in destruction upon her lover. Nevertheless,

⁴ *Lieder d. ält. Edda*, "Sigrdrifumál". p. 318; *Poetic Edda*, p. 390.

it leads her, too, to value the more active symbols of love. It instigates the father to bring to her service the spirit of creative activity, Loge, wandering unbound, undirected. This symbol of active love, burning in the fiercest manifestation of its nature, can be a terror to none but the self-protecting coward. Yet the god himself has no place on Brünnhilde's rock. "For one only shall woo the bride", sings Wotan as he accedes to Brünnhilde's final request, "one freer than I, the god!" (VI, 83 W).

One tender farewell the god permits himself, in which he recalls the loving happiness which has played upon him from those eyes which he must close, the lips which he may never more touch. Then he must follow alone his path of sacrifice for his earlier selfish use of power. Wagner has poured into this scene all the currents of unconscious desire. There is the longing which pervaded Wagner's own life, the craving for inner rest. It is heard in this farewell to that which love has known. There is the strength of the spirit that resolutely enters upon its own latter way, while about it is the triumph of the love that shall awaken to the renewed higher purpose. Brünnhilde's slumber represents the desire that is death but it is also a slumber from which there shall be an awakening to answer the summons of life's realities. It is as if Wagner's own nature could not permit him to rest satisfied with a message of despair, of insatiable longing to be stilled only in death. His message rose again to the world of living, striving beings. So the infinite longing of Wotan's farewell to Brünnhilde is mingled with the magic of the leaping flames, the flames which separate the girl forever from her father as they burn upward to the new day. There is prophecy, too, of the hero yet unborn, Siegfried, who shall meet the challenge of the god, the older one, "Who fears the point of my spear, he never shall pass through the fire!" (VI, 84 W).

CHAPTER VII

THE AWAKENING TO ADULT LOVE

The hero worthy to awaken the woman who has renounced her past must also be free from such attachments. It is psychically necessary that Siegfried should be reared in the forest apart from the care even of the mother. There will be no long wandering here, as in the case of Parsifal, before the folly of the boy is left behind.¹ Yet the way for Siegfried as for Brünnhilde is destined not to be an unclouded one. The past extends its influence upon the freest of love's experiences.

Siegfried's nature manifests its independence as his activities take him abroad in the forest upon his own errands. It holds him aloof from the dwarfish figure skulking about the only home which Siegfried has known. Mime presents to us the nature of a man sunken to an even lower level than that of Alberich, who actively cursed love in order to obtain possession of the gold. Mime is passively sodden in his bondage to the nutritive aspect of life. He reveals parenthood reduced to the merest service of food, warmth and lodging, a service to the boy which he reiterates with exasperating insistence. All this service is instigated by a doubly base motive. On the one hand Mime is nurturing Siegfried that through him he may revenge himself upon Alberich, under whose lash Mime once writhed. In this Mime represents that impotence of nature which is always a child. He is a slave in his inferiority to a superior nature, superior at least in its active power, for he has no strength to attain a position of true independence of such a nature. On the other hand he attempts secretly to dominate the helpless child whom circumstance has thrown into his way. The dominating impulse, too, in this form manifests not the strength of independent adulthood but the tyranny of a nature which below consciousness knows its own weakness.

If pity existed in the nature of Mime it was there only for the anguished mother whom he found outside his cave. The knowledge which she brought of her child's name and origin, with all that these

¹ X, p. 367, *Parsifal*. "The paths of wandering and of sorrow I came". See Mensendieck, *ibid.*, pp. 149-190.

implied of the deed to be accomplished by him, incited Mime to the care of the child. He will satisfy his lust for possession and his desire for revenge through the child. Not for Wotan but for Mime shall the child rescue the gold from the dragon's power. Reproductive knowledge shall be kept from the boy. Let all such impulse be stifled that the boy may belong more exclusively to Mime's individual service, "Thou shalt believe what I tell thee; I am father to thee and mother too" (VI, 93, 94 S). All the love that Mime knows is that which causes the young to fret after the care that the old have given them: "Distressed, the young long for the nest of the old; the longing is love. So thou hankerest for me, so also thou lovest thy Mime—so must thou love him! What the bird is to the birdling, when it feeds it in its nest, before the young, fledged, may fly, that is to thee, thou child, the expert caretaking Mime—that must he be to thee" (VI, 92 S).

Siegfried is intolerant of the crooked little creature that fawns upon him with pretended solicitude for his well being. Mime's repeated enumerations of the comforts which he has bestowed upon the child give still further evidence of the type of narrowed satisfactions which belong to the nutritive egotistic interest. At first sight Siegfried may appear ungratefully inconsiderate of the dwarf who has tended him for years. But it is essential that he should turn from those things which are forced into the way of the libido's development. Such nutriment as Mime dispenses becomes poisonous brew in the hands of self-seeking, just as Mime actually turns his boasted broth into a potion to end, if possible, Siegfried's life.

Mime's nature and that of Siegfried have little in common. Yet the nutritive side of life is a necessity to the reproductive with a special importance at the beginning of life. Its ugliness becomes apparent only if the latter instinct is thrust aside to give the other place. For another reason Siegfried experiences an unexplained impulse always leading him back to the Mime whose stunted nature he has come to despise. He has questioned nature in the forest and become aware that there are matters knowledge of which Mime has denied him. Surely this dwarfed being cannot be his father nor any similar creature his mother. There is something far more important in life than the physical comforts of which Mime boasts. Siegfried compels from Mime the knowledge which it is the child's right to obtain, a knowledge which the parent's timidity, symbolized in Mime's fear for himself, keeps too long from the child. Siegfried, entering into the reproductive knowledge rightfully his, is aware at

last that he is free from the bondage to that narrowed existence so long upheld before him. "My father art thou not, in the wide world am I at home; thy hearth is not my house, my covering is not thy roof", sings Siegfried, when Mime has disclosed to him the symbol of his father's nature, broken though the sword is. "As the fish swims glad in the flood, as the finch wings free its flight, I will fly from here, float away. As the wind over the wood shall I blow thither—thee, Mime, never again to see!" (VI, 98, 99 S).

He must have his father's sword first. Mime, clever smith when the medium is only the multiplying gold, has no power with this weapon. Fear and care, anxiety for his own welfare, hang over Mime's efforts like a pall. They mount up to absolute terror for his ultimate safety. Siegfried needs no instruction except from the rising instinct within him. No bondage of subservience to another's will creates distrust of himself. Instinctive certainty marks his every action. It rings jubilant in his song. The cowering Mime looks on with astonishment as Siegfried evidences no fear to reduce the sword's precious fragments to apparent destruction, "Dost thou file it to powder, grind it to dust? How wilt thou crush out the steel?" (VI, 115 S). Siegmund had drawn the sword whole from the ash tree and it had failed him. Siegfried, stripped of a father's protection—in what loathsome form does this protection appear to him—is victorious already in his freedom.

There is an ancient mythological and pseudoscientific conception that decomposition or dismemberment must precede reproduction. This may have its origin in part in the lavish wastefulness with which nature surrounds the important process of the engendering of new beings. It may rest upon the association of the death of the older form with the origin and growth of the new. It seems also to have a deeper psychic origin in the desire of the son completely to displace the father to begin life unhindered and sufficient within himself.² Be that as it may, Siegfried reduces the sword to its elementary

² Herbert Silberer, *Problems of Mysticism*, New York, 1917, pp. 82-85; "Das Zerstückelungsmotiv im Mythos", *Imago*, III, 1914, pp. 502-523. Cf. also, as a parallel to the birth of Siegfried associated with the dismemberment of his father's sword, the passage from the Egyptian "Hymn to Osiris", reproduced by Budge, *ibid.*, I, p. 94, concerning the conception and birth of Horus by Isis from the dead Osiris: "She made to rise up the helpless members of him whose heart was at rest, she drew from him his essence, and she made therefrom an heir. She suckled the child in solitariness, and none knew where his place was, and his arm increased in strength in the House of Keb (*i.e.*, the earth)."

parts in order that he may reconstruct it entirely in his own way with his own skill. Mime, a figure made despicable in part to represent the son's utter rejection of the interference of the father, can only wonder and quake. He reassures himself with one wild phantasy of the nutritive power to which he will yet attain, but Siegfried, heedless of his mutterings, toils on at the forge. The libido wins its rewards in efforts not in dreams, while song, not sullen mumblings, accompanies its work. The song passes into a burst of triumph as the sword assumes once more its effective form, "Thou wast in twain, I have forced thee whole, no blow shall now strike thee apart. For my father, dying, the steel burst asunder, the living son has made it new. . . . Nothing, Nothing, new and restored! I have waked thee again to life" (VI, 122 S).

Mime has been visited by that other father figure, that shadowy image which haunts the background like unconscious memories. The Wanderer has looked in upon the anxious Mime, the better father nature peering into the hidden egotistic designs. At the same time it is as if he would rouse this baser aspect of the personality to a sense of its insecure position and to its neglected reproductive opportunities. The self-absorbed Mime, however, submitted to an ordeal of question and answer, an analysis of his position, only falls more deeply into craven fear, foreseeing his own fitting end.

The next act of the drama reveals the Wanderer in the midst of his own perplexities. The father's higher nature is still in conflict over the freedom of the younger generation. Wotan once avoided this eastern wood where the dragon lies upon the heap of gold but now the bonds of the ancient greed, whose penalty is still unpaid, have drawn him hither, "To the cave of envy I came by night. Whom do I see there in the dark?" (VI, 123 S). The curse-bearing voice of Alberich, who is holding watch before this cave of envy, answers him in terror. This is that more active form of the baser nature, he who has already laid snares for the hero and his unstained libido. Long ago Wotan had heard the tale which confirmed Erda's dark prophecy, "When love's evil foe in anger shall beget a son, then the end of the blessed ones tarries not". He knew even then that Alberich, without love, had compelled a woman to bear him the "fruit of hate". Even "to the loveless one the miracle has happened" (VI, 42, 43 W). This loveless one, therefore, has a son who shall oppose the progress of love in Siegfried. Fearful is the difference in the nature of these sons, the offspring of hate and the child of love. Hagen, Alberich's son, is dumb to everything but his

father's commands. His one end is that of the father, to obtain that power of the gold which drags all to its withering grasp. Siegfried, free to his own impulse, can know nothing of such a value to the gold; it lies outside his comprehension. "Hear me well", sings the Wanderer to the threatening Alberich, "be on thy guard, the boy does not know the ring. . . . Him whom I love I let act for himself. Let him stand or fall, his own lord is he. Only heroes can satisfy me" (VI, 126 S).

Siegfried, the boy who knows nothing of the Wanderer awaiting his deed, Siegfried acting in freedom, typifies the unquestioning power of libido in its unhindered action. His acts are the spontaneous outpouring of the creative force never yet turned aside from its natural course. Neither the value of the ring to be won nor the command of another is needed to instigate his deeds. Hagen, on the other hand, is impotent through the interference of hatred. For hatred, as Alberich has revealed, is the turning of the free action of love to self-serving ends. All Hagen's capacity for spontaneous activity has lain crushed beneath the burden of envious self-seeking which his father imposed upon him even in his birth. We find Hagen later with his half-brother Gunther sitting within the Gibichung hall, a home of honor and fame, just within the threshold of a life of freedom to which Hagen himself may never attain. Even Gunther is tainted by the subtle working of egotistic desires fostered in him by the half-brother more completely given over to the evil. The mother, Grimhilde, had borne Gunther in this sphere of freer opportunity but in the power of Alberich's evil desire she had given life to the other son in the darkness of crushing hatred. Yet Gunther, readily succumbing to Hagen's artful suggestions, can laud that mother's entrance into the baser realm. "Praised be Grimhild, who gave us the brother!" Gunther sings as he listens to the specious temptations which Hagen knows how to spread before him (VI, 190 G).

Hagen, on the other hand, forbidden by his nature even so much of the freedom as is Gunther's inherited right, recognizes the fate to which he is doomed, "Thee the true named, I count to be envied; she who bore us brothers both, Frau Grimhild, bade me accept this" (VI, 186 G). He reveals his bitterness as he answers his father's reminder of the bold spirit which he should have derived from his mother, "If the mother gave me valor, yet I may not thank her that to thy wiles she submitted . . ." (VI, 209 G). All this bitterness, therefore, overflows in hatred which plots against Siegfried, whom

Hagen must admit as the hero, strong in his freedom, love-begotten, "Siegfried, the offspring of the Wälsungen, he is the strongest hero. A twin pair, compelled by love, Siegmund and Sieglinde, gave life to this son noblest born . . ." (VI, 188 G). He cannot but acknowledge Siegfried's deeds but his impotent envy seeks to turn these to the account of the desires fostered in him by his father Alberich. The evil suggestions which appear in Hagen's dreams through the voice of Alberich urge him to hatred of all those who rejoice in the free activity of the libido: "Hagen, my son, hate thou the joyous, if thou lovest me, empty of pleasure, sorrow-laden, as thou shouldst! Art thou powerful, bold and clever, those whom we combat in the strife of this night, already our envy gives trouble to them. . . . I—and thou, we shall inherit the world, if I deceive not myself in thy faithfulness, sharest thou my grudge and rage" (VI, 209, 210 G). Hagen's father must remind him, too, of the ground of this grudge and this rage. It lies in the weakness of that nature which avenges its impotence through hate, "Truly not strong enough to withstand the dragon—which alone was given to the Wälsung—yet to implacable hate I brought up Hagen . . ." (VI, 211 G).

Siegfried knows none of this, this driving stimulus of hatred which seeks to overtake the lost opportunity for a deed which weakness could not meet. Alberich reminds his son for what he has prepared him, "that against heroes thou mayest hold hard for me" (VI, 211 G). Siegfried, on the contrary, acting alone, undirected, has bid the sword which he forged "strike the false one, fell the rogue", and with it he fares forth to whatever deed may invite his free energy (VI, 122 S). Impetuous eagerness characterizes the hero as he comes to remove from his pathway the objects that bar his way. Fafner, symbol of mere physical might, that parent quality fearfully admired as it is dwelt upon by the timid child's imagination, falls before Siegfried's sword. Mime has described this dragon in terms of all the terrors which a childish imagination can conjure before the youth yet Siegfried remains untouched by fear. It is not fear but the necessity to remove that which is hindering in its baseness that leads him next to destroy Mime, this crafty form of evil. Mime's scarcely concealed desire regarding Siegfried is his undoing. His secret purposes break through his defenses as the baser desires of human nature force themselves through the disguise of conscious appearances. The taste of the dragon's blood gives Siegfried entrance into the secret powers of nature. He is no longer deaf to the deeper meanings of life for good or for ill. He per-

ceives the base design which forces its utterance through Mime's every attempt to press his seemingly kind attentions upon Siegfried. The latter, aware of the true import of Mime's words, slays this enemy and leaves him where he belongs. Physical might and evil craft lie there together upon the heap of coveted gold, toward which the free hero casts not so much as a second look.

A new voice which he has heard among the woodland sounds has brought a suggestion of value to the objects which he has overlooked. The bird voice points out these treasures signifying only their already accepted values, "Hey, to Siegfried belongs now the Nibelungen hoard, oh, might he find the treasure now in the cave! Would he the tarnhelm win, it would serve him for wonderful deed, but might he consider the ring, it would make him to master the world!" (VI, 139 S). This reminder leads Siegfried to choose, still with lighthearted disregard of the treasures, only two of the hoarded objects, the ring, which is to attain a new significance in his hands, and the magic helmet, with which the appearance of things may be changed. Just so much he takes of the riches which life gathers to itself. So much lies at the threshold where reproductive activity departs from the mere acquisition of possession. Treasure thus accepted surrounds life with a stimulation of value to lead onward into new miracles beyond. Or, on the other hand, merely so much may prove a danger to the libido's progress. Siegfried remains careless of the possession of the two objects he has selected, until the ring becomes to him a symbol of a new bond of love and later he is confronted with its older significance as bound with hatred and death. The tarnhelm hangs unnoticed at his side until Hagen, whose sphere is deceit, instructs him to resort to the shifting of form, which for the first time throws the disguises of evil desire over the actions of the open-hearted hero.³ ". . . I almost forgot the treasure", confesses Siegfried to Hagen's question, when the former appears later at the Gibichung hall, "so value I its useless wealth!" And he points with equal indifference to the object hanging from his girdle, "This piece of work, whose virtue I know not" (VI, 193 G).

Siegfried has felt his freedom from Mime's oppressive attentions even before he finally removes Mime from his path, "That he is not

³ Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* for change of form in order to gratify forbidden desires or as a punishment for such gratification. See Frazer, *Golden Bough*, Pt. V, "The Spirits of the Corn and the Wild", Vol. I, pp. 304, 305; *Folk-lore*, II, 413, for a few of the many instances of shape shifting in folk belief.

my father, how happy now I feel about it! Now for the first time the fresh wood pleases me; now first laughs for me the joyous day . . .” We hear, too, in Siegfried, the note of kindly feeling which unites father and son, the sentiment of admiration by which the son identifies himself with the parent, “I wonder how my father looked,—ah, surely like myself” (VI, 133 S). Then a still more tender thought takes possession of the youth there in the stillness of the forest: “But—how did my mother look, that—I cannot make clear to myself!—Surely her brightly shining eyes glanced like the eyes of the hind,—yet more beautiful.⁴ But when she bore me in sorrow, why then did she die? Do all human mothers die for their sons? That would be sad, I trow.—Ah, might I, the son, see my mother!—My—mother! A woman! . . . Thou lovely birdling! . . . If I could understand its sweet twittering! Surely it would tell me something—perhaps—of the dear mother?” (VI, 134 S).

Wagner has created in Siegfried the masculine individual complete in his own strength. At first he is unaware of any other need than that answered there. There is in him none of that hesitancy which marks the development of the less complete male. He has been satisfied with his own companionship or with such playmates as the wolf and the bear. Yet a time has come in his intercourse with beasts and birds when he has felt a separateness on his part from the life that is theirs. They have a love among themselves; his experience must lie elsewhere. Under the trees he tries to imitate the song which he hears above him but it is not his to produce. He consoles himself with a familiar note upon his accustomed horn. This call of his own masculine strength brings on the combat with the giant form of sheer physical power. Again Wagner has touched upon that transition stage of the maturing child, this time the male, who must pass from the strict isolation within its own sex to the possibility of a wider relationship with a different one. Siegfried must discover the full nature of the masculine form through contact with his own sex before he is ready to approach the woman awaiting him. In Fafner, the dragon, Siegfried overcomes a formidable power of physical might and removes this mere excess of self-sufficient strength which avails for nothing but passively to guard the gold. Such a form is like the child's exaggerated ideal of mere size as the embodiment of might, just as in the thought of the undeveloped Mime the giant excites only wonder and fear. More than this, however, Siegfried tastes the blood of the dragon and receives in the

⁴ See note 5, p. 44.

stead of such falsely defined power the mysterious essence of power which symbolically is hidden in the giant's form.⁵ This gives Siegfried entrance into those mysteries of life which have to do with the sphere of adult love. The blithesome child set out to learn fear, so far submitting to the mistaken tutelage of Mime. Such a lesson, however, has no place in the hero's life but another profounder lesson of the untried values which lie in that other region where Mime has no entrance. Siegfried partakes of the dragon's blood. The child penetrated by the magic of life becomes a man. Siegfried is initiated now into the secret he has not known before, that of the woman's message which the bird note contains. This answers to the desire that has arisen within him, while gradually the voice unfolds to him the wonders that lie before him.

He removes the evil of Mime's presence, Mime who with his nutritive poison would take the hero's life, of which the voice gives the latter distinct warning. Then Siegfried returns to the enticement of the strange sound. He throws himself down in the shade, hot with the slaying under the noonday sun, and gives himself up to those phantasies which support the longings within him, "Yet I—am so alone, have neither brother nor sister; my mother vanished, my father fell, the son never saw them!" (VI, 149 S). Then, in the midst of the dreamy reverie which mingles itself with the forest sounds, arises the wondrous new melody. The sweet voice singing above him tells Siegfried of "the loveliest woman. Upon the high rock she sleeps, a fire burns round her hall . . ." At the words he springs excitedly from the place where he sits, eager to hear the song of which "only those who long can know the sense". He laughs exultingly when he hears that none may win this bride "only he who knows not fear!" For who is he? "The stupid boy, who does not know fear—my birdling, yes, that is I!" (VI, 150, 151 S). He leaps to follow the flight of the bird as it precedes him, singing to guide his course.

The way to the union of lovers is not yet a pathway clear in the sunlight. Night and storm lie about the final surrender of the father and the mother, Wotan and Erda, to the era of the succeeding generation. Wotan is proud to acknowledge the freedom of the chosen

⁵ for blood as "life principle, soul" see Röheim, *ibid.*, pp. 152 ff., also as substitute for other substances produced by the body, pp. 26 ff.; also Silberer, *Problems of Mysticism*, pp. 123, 124. As fructifying substance, Rank and Sachs, *Significance of Psychoanalysis for the Mental Sciences*, New York, 1916, p. 55, with note.

hero, "He who was chosen by me yet never has known me, a boy, the boldest, bare of my counsel, has won the Nibelung ring . . ." (VI, 156 S). Yet Wotan, the Wanderer, has come to the all-wise mother in a last protest, an almost involuntary grasping after something with which to stay the "rolling wheel" of events (VI, 153 S). He wakens her from a long dreaming sleep, "Thine awakening song I sing, that thou awakest; I sing thee up out of pondering sleep" (VI, 152 S). He is in the grip of his own final conflict even while he yields and compels her to acceptance of the inevitable.

Erda, however, does not waken willingly. Erda has given Wotan a daughter, she reminds him, in whom to find his perplexities solved; can he not turn to her and leave the mother to her long retirement? Wotan now has looked more definitely into the inexorable changes of reality than has this dreaming mother. He has put the maid from him, "on the rock she is fast asleep, the holy one will waken only as wife to love a man. Could I put questions to her?" (VI, 154 S). But to what strange things then has the mother awakened? "Confused am I since I've waked, wild and distraught circles the world! The Walküre, the Wala's child, has atoned in the bonds of sleep, while the knowing mother slept? He who taught defiance punishes defiance? He who unlooses the deed is wroth at the deed? . . . Let me descend again, let sleep seal up my knowledge!" (VI, 154, 155 S). Yet she may not return to sleep as it was before. They stand before one another, the vanquished father and mother, not what they seem, only powerless forms of night's shadows. Each accuses the other, "Thou art—not what thou namest thyself!" "Thou art—not what thou thinkest thyself!" (VI, 155, 156 S). Each one finds again definite individuality only to acknowledge the passage of the right of the individual activity henceforth into the deeds of the child. Wotan the all-powerful, Erda the all-wise, each is now to be effaced. Wotan accepts it, Erda may no longer maintain her existence except in eternal dreams. The unconscious, Freud reminds us, probably can never accept the idea of personal death.⁶ Wotan has passed beyond the domination exercised by the unconscious wish for endless existence. He accepts that which consciousness has seen as inevitable. This, too, shall be Erda's lot. Wotan will no longer rest upon those dreams of the past that lie buried with the once sought mother form, "Wisdom of the primeval mothers approaches its end; thy knowledge vanishes before my will. Knowest thou what Wotan—wills? To thee, unwise one, into thine

⁶ Freud, *Reflections on War and Death*, New York, 1918, pp. 41, 62.

ear I cry, that thou now, carefree, forever shalt sleep" (VI, 156 S). Now shall Erda's sleep become the everlasting sleep from which she shall no more reappear, for action belongs to her daughter. "Fear concerning the end of the gods can no longer afflict me since my wish—wills it!" Wotan can say. "What in the wild pain of a divided mind, despairing once I resolved, glad and joyful now I freely bring it to pass . . . Her whom thou didst bear me, Brünnhilde, her, lovely one, will the hero awaken; wakened thy knowing child shall work a redeeming deed for the world.—Therefore sleep thou now, close thine eye; dreaming look on mine end! What they shall effect—to the youth eternal granteth in rapture the god.—Descend, then, Erda, primitive mother fear, primitive care! To eternal sleep, descend, descend!" (VI, 156, 157 S).

One encounter must the god have with the youth who never yet has seen him. Again involuntarily, as it were, the god's former power rises to claim that which he has already yielded. He has a nobler purpose, too, in the final test of the youth's self-assertiveness. The young man's response as the Wanderer addresses him both rejoices and angers the god. Siegfried displays that arrogance of the young which can ill brook even a passing delay on the part of the older one. The Wanderer, on his part, cannot refrain from a reminder of his own former position as the conquering power. This shall recall youth to its natural debt to the past, "Who made that sword so sharp and hard that the strongest foe fell before it?" Siegfried presumes himself entirely self-armed, "I forged that myself because the smith was not able to do it. Otherwise doubtless I should have been swordless." The Wanderer insists, "But who created the strong fragments out of which the sword thou didst forge?" Siegfried is still scornful of a debt to any but himself, "What know I of that! I know only this, that the pieces would have served me naught, had I not made the sword new for myself" (VI, 158, 159 S). The ready self-sufficiency of this answer makes the old god laugh aloud in his satisfaction. This pleasure in his progress is interpreted amiss by Siegfried. Like youth always, he distrusts even the pleasure of the old as it concerns him, so jealously must youth guard its right to independent action, "As long as I have lived an old man has always stood in my way. I have now swept him aside", and he warns the Wanderer to have a care lest a similar fate should befall him (VI, 159 S).

With small ceremony Siegfried informs the aged one of the single service he can render him, merely to point him forward. A sudden

flare of Wotan's former power is fanned into being by the young man's presumption. The father's right of possession in his daughter, his opposing might to the son, are awakened to a defiance of this youth who so disdainfully asserts his own right to the father's sword and to the maiden to whom it has opened the way. The father's cry is a cry of pain, "My power holds the sleeping maid enclosed. He who should waken her, he who should win her, powerless would he make me forever!" (VI, 162 S).⁷ He points to the distant terror of the raging fire and then, since this cannot affright the hero, he makes one furious display of might. He had proclaimed his spear as the test of him who should traverse the flames. This spear he thrusts into Siegfried's path, "Thou fearest not the fire, then let my spear bar thy way! My hand still holds the haft of sovereign power. The sword which thou wieldedst, this shaft once splintered; once more then let it break on the eternal spear!" (VI, 162, 163 S). But Siegfried is the awaited hero. He is here to take up the father's defeated might, "My father's foe! Do I find thee here?" (VI, 163 S). The older one, once victorious, can no longer restrain the oncoming generation. This is the man who shall win the daughter surrendered by the father. A fearful outburst of thunder signals the overthrow of the power of the father's selfish protective desire. Wotan's better will is fulfilled even as Siegfried "fights with the Wanderer and hews his spear in pieces". The Wanderer draws back, "Go on, I can no longer hold thee!" (VI, 163 S).

No more will Wotan bar the way of the son or the daughter. The end of the gods is accepted and this will he await. Once more only, in the involuntary appeal of the dreaming man, will the cry press itself from him, the anguish of his defeated personal wish. He will ask thus once for the salvation of himself and the other gods, although the daughter who knows his better thought will refuse to obey. There comes the time when Waltraute, one of those sisters to whom a love beyond the father is a thing impossible to understand, seeks the awakened Brünnhilde to carry this last involuntarily breathed message of the aged father. It is not the higher wish of the god. The higher wish is that for the completion of the deed undertaken by Siegfried and Brünnhilde. The abruptness with which the

⁷ Cf. *Br.* XI, p. 38, "See how he [Wotan] stands there in the third act confronting Siegfried! Here, finally, before his downfall, he is so involuntarily human that—contrary to his highest purpose—once more his old pride is stirred, and indeed (note it well!) roused through—jealousy concerning Brünnhilde, for she has become his most sensitive spot."

vanquished god disappears from Siegfried's path attests the full significance to him of the defeat at the younger one's hand with the sword once his own. Still it is witness also of his complete acceptance of Siegfried's victory as part of the greater achievement of the life and the love that are free.

Yet there is the later outcry breathed from the ego's personal fear. The poetry is that of simple, direct tragedy in the masterly passage in which Wagner reveals the grim victory of Wotan over his former desires. Waltraute, who depicts the father's situation in her appeal to Brünnhilde, is the daughter who has drawn nearest to the waiting god in the lonely silence of his submission. To her, whose goal is the father alone, interest elsewhere is inexplicably selfish. The immediate welfare of the father and his household bounds her horizon. The father's greater thought Waltraute has never grasped, its significance has never been hers. She describes to Brünnhilde his return home from the blow given him in the way: "Lately he returned home. In his hand he held the splinters of his spear; a hero had struck it from him. With mute gesture he sent the strong ones of Walhall to the forest to fell the world ash. He bade them pile the wood of its trunk to a towering heap about the hall of the blessed ones. He had the council of the gods summoned. Solemnly he took the high seat; he bade the anxious ones seat themselves at his side, in order and rank the heroes to fill the hall. So—he sits there, speaking no word, on his high throne, mute and earnest, the splinters of his spear fast clasped in his hand. Holda's apples he will not touch; the gods are rigid with fear and wonder. His two ravens he sent on a journey; should they once return with good tidings, then just once—for the last time forever—the god would smile.—Round about his knees we Walküren lie; blind he remains to our pleading looks. Anxious and endless fear consumes us all. On his breast I pressed myself weeping; then his mien broke, he thought, Brünnhilde, of thee! He breathed a deep sigh, closed his eye and, as in a dream, he spoke this word,—'Should she return the ring to the daughters of the deep Rhine, saved would be the god and the world from the burden of the curse!'

Jüngst kehrte er heim;
in der Hand hielt er
seines Speeres Splitter:
die hatte ein Held ihm geschlagen.
Mit stummem Wink

Walhall's Starke
wies er zum Forst,
die Welt-Esche zu fällen;
des Stammes Scheite
hiess er sie schichten
zum ragendem Hauf'
rings um der Seligen Saal.
Der Götter Rat
liess er berufen;
den Hochsitz nahm
heilig er ein:
ihm zu Seiten
hiess er die Bangen sich setzen,
in Ring und Reih'
die Hall' erfüllen die Helden.
So- sitzt er,
sagt kein Wort,
auf hehrem Stuhle
stumm und ernst,
des Speeres Splitter
fest in der Faust;
Holda's Äpfel
rührt er nicht an:
Staunen und Bangen
binden starr die Götter.—
Seiner Raben beide
sandt' er auf Reise:
kehrten die einst
mit guter Kunde zurück,
dann noch einmal
—zum letzten Mal—
lächelte ewig der Gott.—
Seine Knie' umwindend
liegen wir Walküren:
blind bleibt er
den flehenden Blicken;
uns alle verzehrt
Zagen und endlose Angst.
An seine Brust
presst' ich mich weinend:
da brach sich sein Blick

er gedachte, Brünnhilde, dein'!
 Tief seufzte er auf,
 schloss das Auge,
 und wie im Traume
 raunt' er das Wort:—
 'des tiefen Rheines Töchtern
 gäbe den Ring sie zurück,
 von des Fluches Last
 erlös't wär' Gott und Welt!' (VI, 202, 203 G).

What is it that Wagner himself says of Brünnhilde's refusal to conform to Wotan's request? His friend Röckel had misunderstood the import of her answer. "Let me further tell you something about Brünnhilde", Wagner writes to him, "you mistake her also if you find her refusal to surrender the ring to Wodan hard and selfish. Do you not realize that Brünnhilde has separated herself from Wodan and all the gods for—the sake of love, because—where Wodan was clinging to schemes she only—loved? After Siegfried has fully awakened her she has no more knowledge than the knowledge of love. Now—the symbol of this love—since Siegfried has gone from her—is this ring. When Wodan demands it of her the ground of her separation from Wodan appears before her—because she acts from love—and now she still knows only one thing, that she has renounced all divinity for love's sake. But she knows that love is the only divine thing. So all Walhall's glory may perish, but the ring—love—she will not sacrifice. I beg of you, how pitiable, avaricious and common would she appear if she refused the ring because, perhaps through Siegfried, she knew of its magic charm, of its power of gold!"⁸ Yet it is not Wotan's higher thought, Wagner makes it appear, that has asked for the ring. Waltraute has acted upon the murmur of the dream, which represents the relief of a desire repressed, forbidden to turn to action. It is at her own bidding, not Wotan's directed order, that she hastens to Brünnhilde.

What has the ring, through the fulfilment of love, become to Brünnhilde? For the time at least it has been lifted to symbolize love's purest form. "If you shudder", Wagner continues to Röckel, "that this woman finds the symbol of love just in this accursed ring, then will you feel exactly what I intended and recognize in this the power of the curse of the Nibelung in its most fearful, tragic

⁸ *Br.* XI, pp. 40, 41. Wagner uses here the form Wodan although otherwise the philologically incorrect form Wotan.

degree . . ."⁹ The most perfect adult love must have its origin in the needs of the ego. Thus love is subject to the poisons with which the ego's desires may infest it. But the flood of free love is still undisturbed when Siegfried bears the ring, careless of its golden value, from Fafner's den to the awakening bride. Empty to him of its appeal to greed, it becomes the radiant symbol of the love that unites him to Brünnhilde. As such she may not yield it to save the members of her childhood home nor to restore the happy lot of the gods, which for herself she has laid aside to become the woman of reality. She left the father's house, surrendered in truth by him, to enter the wider citizenship of the race. She may not exchange the token of this greater fealty for the old loyalty, "More than Walhall's bliss, more than the fame of the eternal ones—is the ring to me. One glance at its shining gold, one flash of its glorious brightness—counts more to me than the ever enduring happiness of all the gods!" (VI, 204, 205 G).

What has transpired to bring to Brünnhilde this knowledge of a new love? The aged father had vanished leaving the hero, self-impelled, guided no longer even by the song of the bird, to make his way to the flaming rock. Lustily Siegfried winds his horn to plunge forward through the billows of fire which envelop him. Siegfried is still undaunted as he is drawn into the fire which symbolizes the passion of love, the passion which has the power to terrify the libido even while releasing it from its personal bonds. Still it is not the fire nor the force which rages within him which teaches Siegfried what fear is. One fear the bravest hero may not escape; it lies at the door of contact with that other personality where the separateness of the ego breaks down to infuse itself with another in love. That other personality which awaits Siegfried in its slumbering beauty causes the strong man's strength to waver. Siegfried turns back to the source of his life, "Whom shall I call to mine aid to save me? Mother, Mother, think upon me! . . . Am I a coward? Is this to fear? O Mother, Mother, thy daring child!" (VI, 165 S). This is not for long, for though he sings before the awakened woman, "With anxious fear thou bindest me, thou only hast taught me its anxious care", yet love returns with that strength that casts out fear (VI, 169 S). "My boldness of spirit returns to me", soon he is singing, "and the fear, ah, which never I learned—the fear that scarcely thou didst teach me, the fear—it seems to me—I, stupid one, have forgot it already!" (VI, 175 S).

⁹ Ibid., p. 41.

How fares it with the woman, Brünnhilde? The lovers face one another upon the "sunlit heights" of the mountain top. Here in this "blessed wilderness" would love be alone if anywhere (VI, 164 S). Yet neither lover is without some signs of attachment to the past. These lie for Brünnhilde in the objects about her, her maiden armor and her four-footed companion, Grane, symbol of childhood's play and service, sleeping in the fir grove to waken with her.¹⁰ They are present also in the faint memories arising out of the unconscious. The wonders of Siegfried's object of love so stir the profounder sources in which love finds its origin that he not only turns at first to the mother's protection but he questions whether this woman may not be only the mother returned from a long slumber, "So my mother did not die? The lovely one only slept?" (VI, 167 S). "Oh, hail to the mother who bore me, hail to the earth which nurtured me!" Siegfried sings also and Brünnhilde responds in the same overflowing strains as she breaks forth into a fuller rhapsody of the protecting care that has lain in the depths of her woman's nature (VI, 167 S). There we see the deeper desires which represent in the individual the inherited tendencies continued in the race. The daughter merges into the wife only to take up the cycle of woman's love which has been manifest already in the mother. In this Brünnhilde's thought, learned from the father, has been eternal. Like her mother, Erda, she has touch with what has been, what is coming to pass and what shall come to be. (See V, 261 R).

Yet Brünnhilde, like Siegfried, trembles before the demand which love makes of the personal egoism. The woman, destined for the passive rôle, as love's recipient, hesitates longer in her protectiveness. The man in all things is at the bidding of the direct need for action. The woman, biologically designed for the conservation of love's values, finds it a slower task to yield to the practical necessities of love's union. The protection of the parental love, the "divinity" which the father has thrown about her, has a special value which it is difficult to renounce. Woman is fully alive to the wonders of love so long as love is not too definitely a thing of personal experience. Brünnhilde outdistances her lover while love remains in the realm of psychic exaltation, "What thou dost not know, that know I for thee . . ." (VI, 168 S). And then, to withstand the importunity of his too insistent pleading, she sings of the idealization of love.

¹⁰ See S. E. Jelliffe and L. Brink, "The Rôle of Animals in the Unconscious", *Psychoanalytic Review*, IV, 1917, pp. 253-271, for the horse as symbol of the libido and as substitute for the father.

"O Siegfried, Siegfried! . . . Eternal was I, eternal would I be, eternal in the bliss of longing—yet eternal only for thy redemption!" (VI, 172 S). Love's reality here and now she fears.

Siegfried is right, she is still to him only "the dreaming maid", Brünnhilde's sleep is not yet broken (VI, 171 S). She defends herself with the memory of the past. This new love which invades her being, demanding its surrender, seems a shameful thing in contrast to that past, "No god ever approached me, the heroes bowed in reverence before the virgin. Inviolable she departed from Walhall.—Woe, woe, woe to the shame, to the shameful need!" (VI, 170 S). Then she takes refuge in a phase of the libido's development which precedes its entrance into full love of another. It is not alone the child's protected relation within the family that surrounds the ego to prevent its sacrifice to the larger opportunity. Nor is it merely the direct obtaining of pleasure in childhood's objects which bars the way. There is a narcissistic valuation of the personality which, in the course of development, must precede the surrender of the individual to object love. It may form a lasting barrier which prevents the passage over into the greater experience. This arises from a distinct overvaluation of the self, probably due to excess of the infantile ideals of love. Or the narcissism is the moderate check which restrains the love merely until the full realization of the personality has been made in the face of the new possibility opening before it.¹¹

Brünnhilde opposes this barrier to Siegfried's impetuous wooing. Wagner has given expression to this conception before in the mouth of Sieglinde, the conception of the valuation of the self as figured in the Greek legend which gives the name to this stage of psychic development. Narcissus could not turn from the image of himself mirrored in the pool. Sieglinde, on the contrary, trusts her lover because she recognizes in him the features which she saw reflected to her in the brook, "In the brook mine own image I saw—and now I perceive it again; as once from the pool it shone forth, now mine image bringest thou me!" (VI, 19 W). This presents another psychic ground for the love of the twins, for it reveals how gradually the libido proceeds from its familiar field of the ego's own features to the more dissimilar characteristics of the external object belonging

¹¹ See Freud, "Zur Einführung des Narzissmus", *Saml. Kl. Schrift. f. Neurosenlehre*, 4te Folge, Leipzig und Wien, 1918, pp. 78–112, esp. pp. 94 ff. for place of narcissism in psychosexual development. Rôheim, *Spiegelzauber*, Leipzig und Wien, 1919, esp. Chap. IV, for transition from contemplation of self over to external object.

to a new reality. In Siegfried and Brünnhilde the breach in the similarity has widened so far that the ego has need of greater courage to unite with the object still further from its own likeness. Hence, for the time, Brünnhilde attempts to turn Siegfried back to love for himself. She is unmindful of the fact that the boyhood image reflected from the clear waters when he roamed the forests only stirred in him the longing for its complement. She pleads with him to return to the undisturbed image of himself: "Hast thou seen thine image in the clear brook? Has it rejoiced thee with gladness? Should thy touch have roused the water to wavelets, the brook's clear surface would have broken and fled, so that thine image thou'dst have seen no more, only the water's rippling flow. Then touch me not, trouble me not. Eternally light shalt thou laugh from me, happy in thine own reflection, a hero glad in his joy!—O Siegfried, Siegfried, . . . love—thyself and turn from me; destroy not what is thine own!

Sah'st du dein Bild
im klaren Bach?
Hat es dich frohen erfreut?
Rührtest zur Woge
das Wasser du auf;
zerflösse die klare
Fläche des Bach's:
dein Bild säh'st du nicht mehr,
nur der Welle schwankend Gewog'.
So berühre mich nicht,
trübe mich nicht:
ewig licht
lachst du aus mir
dann selig selbst dir entgegen,
froh und heiter ein Held!—
O Siegfried! Siegfried!
.
Liebe- dich,
und lasse von mir:
vernichte dein Eigen nicht!" (VI, 172, 173 S).

Siegfried will not be silenced. Love to him is a thing of definite realities. He pictures to Brünnhilde the surrender to love in a burning symbolism which her defenses can no longer withstand. The

fervor of love's language in which Brünnhilde at last answers Siegfried's entreaties convinces us that Wagner was correct in his estimate of woman's nature. Not the absence of love but its immeasurable need had built up Brünnhilde's defense. If Ortrud's hatred gathered force from her attachment to the "moldering gods" of the past, Brünnhilde had heaped a torrent of love in her association with her father, a torrent which now overflows: "If I am thine?—God-like repose now rushes in billows, the light so chaste burneth in flames, heavenly wisdom stormeth from me, love's exultation puts it to flight! . . . Fearest thou, Siegfried, fearest thou not, the wild raging woman?"

Ob jetzt ich dein?—

Göttliche Ruhe
ras't mir in Wogen;
keusches Licht
lodert in Gluten;
himmlisches Wissen
stürmt mir dahin,
Jauchzen der Liebe
jagt es davon!

.
.

Fürchtest du, Siegfried,
fürchtest du nicht
das wild wütende Weib?" (VI, 174, 175 S).

This love has arisen now to its racial significance. It belongs no more to the past but to the future: "Pass thou Walhall's shining world, let thy proud citadel fall in dust! Farewell, glorious splendor of the gods, end thou in bliss, thou eternal race! Rend, ye Nornen, the rope of the runes! Dusk of the gods, darken upon them, night of destruction, enwrap them within!—Siegfried's star now rises for me; he is mine always, he is mine ever, all that I am heir to, all that is mine, all in all; radiant love, laughing death!

Fahr' hin, Walhall's
leuchtende Welt!
Zerfall' in Staub
deine stolze Burg!
Leb' wohl, prangende

Götter-Pracht!
Ende in Wonne,
du ewig Geschlecht!
Zerreisst, ihr Nornen,
das Runenseil!
Götter-Dämm'rung,
dunk'le herauf!
Nacht der Vernichtung,
neb'le herein!—
Mir strahlt zur Stunde
Siegfried's Stern;
er ist mir ewig,
er ist mir immer,
Erb' und Eigen,
ein' und all':
leuchtende Liebe,
lachender Tod!" (VI, 175, 176 S).

CHAPTER VIII

THE VICTORY OF LOVE IN THE FACE OF DEFEAT

"What I see, that say to thee nightly the Nornen" (VI, 262 R). Long ago Erda thus admonished Wotan to hearken, for his guidance, to the mysterious voices of the night. Once again, when he awakens her for the last time from her sleep, she reminds him of this source of hidden knowledge, "My sleep is dreaming, my dreaming brooding, my brooding the mastering of knowledge. Yet when I sleep, the Nornen wake, they weave the rope, and dutiful spin what I know; why askest thou not the Nornen?" (VI, 153 S). The Nornen personify the dreams of the night. Dreams, like these dim figures, tell of that which has been, the past experiences which consciousness has forgotten. They speak of events not so far distant, which conscious memory still retains. At night, in slumber, these are reconsidered in the light of the forgotten things. Out of the memories, conscious and unconscious, desire weaves events to come.¹ The result may be a better day, or the action that arises brings on destruction. The somber forms of the Nornen toss from one to another this rope of association, the interweaving of the elements of the mental life. Their voices take up the themes of the hidden knowledge, the runic mystery which unites the past with the present and the future beyond. Suddenly the rope is rent, "It tears, it tears, it tears!" (VI, 182 G). There is no more need for these dream forms. They vanish to join the mother, Erda, in her unending sleep. Calamity is pending. The elements of the psychic life are no longer merely the wandering phantasies of the night; they are precipitated into disastrous action.

Love cannot remain perfect within imperfect humanity. Life in the individual alternates between the gathering of the forces for reproductive union and a return again to the ego. "The *Ego* is a great reservoir out of which the *Libido* streams toward its destined objects and into which it flows back again from these objects."² The new values obtained join those which already constitute the worth of the individual. This enriches the sum of energy for new repro-

¹ Cf. Freud, *Interpr. of Dreams*, passim; *Introduc. to Psa.*, pp. 90-205.

² Freud, "One of the Difficulties of Psychoanalysis", *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, I, 1920, p. 19.

ductive service but it may afford revival to the past, which then will assert itself in the face of fresh opportunities. The possibility of regression of the libido lies just within those things that give it creative force. The curse of the past still pursues love.

The sky of love is clear as the forms of the Nornen depart forever to share the mother's slumber. Siegfried and Brünnhilde are alive to life's possibilities. Their love is not a tarrying at the plane of selfish indulgence. "What love should I have toward thee, dear hero", questions Brünnhilde, "did I not send thee forth to new deeds?" (VI, 182 G). It is significant that the woman, once all-sufficient for warlike occupation, has given into the lover's possession all the equipment of her masculine nature. Siegfried appears clothed in the armor that was hers. All that the gods had taught her she has given him, her maidenhood she has granted him to take from her. Now "of knowledge bare—but with wish fulfilled, rich in love—yet empty of power . . ." she lives in her lover's deeds (VI, 183 G). She receives from him the token of his former achievement, the ring which shall be a pledge of his love with all that this love has taken from her. For this ring she has one gift more, that symbol of the swift, unbounded activity of childhood with which she hastened upon the father's errands. This horse shall carry Siegfried to the new deeds which he shall perform in the strength of their mutual love: "For the ring take also now my horse! Once his course with me ran bold through the air. With me he lost his godly might; over clouds away on the flashing storms no more will he swing himself, hot for the road. Yet where'er thou leadest him—though through the fire it be—fearless will Grane follow thee; for thee, O hero, shall he obey!" (VI, 184, 185 G).

Inaction makes it easy to fall back into the allurements of the past, even while one contemplates the love that has risen to the highest triumph. The ebb of the tide follows closely the flood. The sharpest temptations to the libido of man or woman succeed immediately upon the first outpouring of the ego in its new experiences. The ego's sacrifice has recalled to it a sense of its own values, creating a fresh demand for the old protections. It is now that Waltraute appears to Brünnhilde as the messenger of Wotan's involuntarily expressed longing for the reestablishment of that which is past. She comes also as the outward projection of Brünnhilde's unconscious memory of that time gone by, a memory which makes possible a fleeting desire to return. The new love, with its opportunity for wide flung deeds, is still too vivid that such a temptation can remain long. The light

of Brünnhilde's love, streaming from her ring, bids such phantasies begone.

Far remote from her conscious presence, however, the influences of the past are whispering their sinister designs. Dramatically as psychically these appear first in justified form. Hagen's suggestions are offered in the guise of affectionate concern. A brother must be provided with a loyal friend and with a woman to love. A sister, too, shall offer herself subtly to the greatest hero of the world. These are Hagen's plans. The suggestions which he makes may be considered psychically, likewise, as the dim memories out of the past which arise before Siegfried and Brünnhilde to stain the clear present of their love. Behind Hagen lurks the form of Alberich, that father figure who first darkened the daughters' lives. We see the forms of the past typified in the less vivid personalities of the brother and sister of the Gibichung hall. Both Brünnhilde and Siegfried are to find themselves in a bondage at this secondary level of development. Once the libido found its way out from the deeper attachment through the partially liberated brother and sister. Now it appears again at this stage but in regression toward a deeper bondage.

It is a brother form in which the whispers of Alberich, whose selfishness first debased love, find expression in action. The brother form assumes a double aspect. Evil and good intention again are represented in separate forms. Hagen's evil designs are but poorly concealed. His gloomy form, his habitually morose bearing, revealed through the jesting words of his men, express the dissatisfaction which is the only reward of a spirit of hate. The contrasting form of light, the nobler Gunther, is after all only superficially noble. He is a representative of the all too common effect of unconscious fixation upon evilly selfish ends. The unconscious absorption of the libido in such base purposes leaves nothing upon the surface but the appearance of good intention with a certain inherited glory of honor. The individual, empty himself of true power, can maintain these appearances only by the appropriation to himself of the active force of some more capable individual. Gunther presents, therefore, the pitiable figure of a man unable to retain even his inherited estate and to establish it for future generations unless the libido activity of a more adult personality is diverted to his service. Such an one's libido must be tempted first to the service of this seemingly worthy man through the added enticement of union with the sister. It must be brought to a fixation upon the unproductive love of the past. This is accomplished alone through the deceit, symbolized in the magic

drink prepared by Hagen, which the unconscious desires exercise upon the clearer vision of adult love.

The psychic situation, for Siegfried as for Brünnhilde, finds its dramatic expression through the external agents who bring this about. Wagner has drawn together many psychic elements which play in the unconscious to form the intense situations of this concluding drama. The situations represent the several motives at work to precipitate the tragedy. They are those of brother-sister envy and jealousy working as if from without, personified in Hagen as the agent and in those who unconsciously carry through his designs. From within they are projections of such motives working in the unconscious, especially as in Siegfried and Brünnhilde they represent the influences of the past preying upon the love they have found. Love in each of them finds its hindrances not alone in external enemies but also in these unconscious wishes which the dramatic form permits to be projected upon the outward agents.

It is psychologically fitting that the objects which hinder love should be represented in family forms. Behind the action of the brother and the sister, linked to them through Hagen, obedient to his father, is the parent interference in the perfect working of the love of Siegfried and Brünnhilde. This again represents the unconscious tendencies also of each of them, since the parent's wish and the child's conform in the unconscious. Yet in the dramatic situation both Siegfried and Brünnhilde are brought only to a partial return to this deeper form of unconscious desire. Gunther and Gutrune, as a brother and a sister, stand as objects on the road into the unconscious past, the one to attract Siegfried against his conscious intention, the other to appropriate the unwilling Brünnhilde for his bride. Brünnhilde, like Sieglinde in her bondage to Hunding, retains her conscious mastery to the extent that she fights darkly against the hidden motives within herself or projected outwardly into another, feeling herself only forced by some evil against which she is powerless. Both women reveal that peculiar situation into which the daughter is compelled because especially at the mercy of the father's greater power. If the compulsion answers to an unconscious wish on the part of the daughter herself, the fight is so much more sharply painful. Even dramatically, that is in the outward acceptance of the situation, Brünnhilde charges the tragedy of her position to Wotan, the father, "Wotan, enraged one, merciless god! Oh, now I know what the punishment means; to scorn and misery thou huntest me!" (VI, 207 G). She extends her complaints to the gods, his associates,

duplicates of his might, "Sacred gods, heavenly rulers! Is this what ye have whispered in your councils? Do ye teach me sorrow such as none have suffered? Have ye caused me shame such as never was felt?" (VI, 223 G).

The masterly psychology of "Götterdämmerung" lies not alone in its tragic outcome as the inevitable result of the causes which have been visible throughout the Ring cycle. It represents also the vacillation of the actual conflict, the "storm of hearts", with the forces of the unconscious now uppermost, now retreating before the consciousness which seeks to discern them. Consciousness for a time is overwhelmed to appear at last in a full recognition of the forces at work, then to achieve a triumphant victory for the love that can accept the reality even of death.

Brünnhilde, as has been seen, only stands hesitating between clear consciousness and the power of unconscious desires. She is caught in the maelstrom of conflict where senses reel but where there is no consciously voluntary yielding to the unconscious dreams. Again, as with Sieglinde, there is only anguish of soul at the evil that confronts her. It remains as a cruel compulsion from without. She has been deceived, but how? With whom does her betrayal lie? Siegfried is here before her as she arrives at Gunther's halls but with what a strange indifference to her suffering, even to her presence! He moves calmly at the side of another. He admits Gunther's authority over her. A gesture of his finger accompanies his words, "Here is thy husband", as he directs Brünnhilde to Gunther's side (VI, 221 G). But on this finger gleams the ring, significant to her of one thing only, his gift of love with which he had bound her to him, the oath of which love stands broken now. How came he by this ring when it was Gunther's form which stripped it from her? Double is the shame of her betrayal. The confidence of love is torn from its foundation. All the force of this love streams back to her ego's defense. This defense must be the death of him who has most bitterly betrayed her.

All have proved treacherous yet the one who had summoned all her love to respond to his, he has wounded her with sorest shame. She cries in answer to Gunther's wondering question, "Has he betrayed me?", "Thee has he betrayed, and me ye all have betrayed! Were justice done to me, all the blood in the world would not atone to me for your guilt! Yet the death of one shall answer to me for you all; let Siegfried fall—to atone for himself and for you!" (VI, 230, 231 G). Thus she has submitted so far to the evil acting

upon her that she permits love to turn to a reactionary flood of hate which wills the lover's destruction. For this she has imprecated the gods whom she has accused, "Counsel now revenge such as never has risen! Kindle me wrath such as never was tamed! Bid that Brünnhilde's heart should break, only to shatter him who deceived her!" (VI, 223 G). And with her hand on Hagen's spear, not the proud spear of her divine father, she swears a fearful oath, consecrating this craven weapon of hate to the hero's death. She raises her voice with that of Gunther, united with this impotent figure only in this, in a prayer to the father that her lover shall be slain, "All-guiding, avenging god, thou hearer and treasurer of oaths! Wotan, Wotan, behold thou here! Send thou thy terrible sacred host, hither to hearken to the oath of revenge!" Their song is accompanied by the voice of Hagen significantly calling similarly upon that evil nature which has brought about this turning of love to hate, "Elf-father, prince who hast fallen, guardian of night! Nibelungen lord, Alberich, Alberich, think thou upon me! Bid once again the Nibelungen host to obey thy word, lord of the ring!" (VI, 232, 233 G).

Siegfried stands in a different position. His surrender to the regressive forms of desire is a complete one for the time being, necessitating no struggle, no unhappiness in himself. In the external form of the drama this is brought to pass without his knowledge. Wagner has made use of a conventional motive, borrowed also from his Icelandic sources, to represent the overcoming of consciousness by the onrush of unconscious desire.³ This is the draught of forgetfulness which, by its magic power can obliterate the immediate past from memory to leave the victim at the mercy of freshly sprung desires. Many beverages are known to mankind by which consciousness can be so dulled or temporarily extinguished that the repressed desires of the unconscious may gain unusual freedom. This may be one ground for the growth of the superstition of the magic potion that is able to remove and to restore recollection of persons and events or even to bring to pass the action of those desires which consciousness, remaining in full control, would not dare permit. The magic nature of a beverage seems also to be based upon that unconscious displacement of values already noted

³ *Lieder d. ält. Edda, Grippspö*", p. 284; *Poetic Edda*, p. 349, with note 33; *Die Völsunga-saga hrsg. v. E. Wilken* (with *Die prosaische Edda*); Paderborn, 1877, p. 197. See *Die Edda, übersetzt und erläutert v. H. Gering*, Leipzig u. Wien, 1892, p. 191, with note 2.

that symbolizes one bodily substance by another or by some fluid outside the organism. Then to the substance that enters the body as food or drink there is ascribed the virtue of some organic product from which ego satisfaction is derived or through which relation with a loved object is established. Through such symbolic displacement of values either the passive infantile love satisfactions are served or the adult love relationship is expressed. The former appears more prominently in folklore since the symbolic displacement in itself reveals the infantile confusion of nutritive with reproductive interests.⁴ Thus with Siegfried the potion becomes the means through which to entice him into the infantile relationship represented by the sister form belonging to the family into whose bonds he is drawn. In the Icelandic tale *Sigrdrifa*, the Walküre, also in part the original of Wagner's *Brünnhilde*, brings Sigurd a drink of remembrance that his vows shall not be forgotten.⁵ Wagner has so filled *Brünnhilde's* awakening sense with the reality of love both for herself and for her lover that no mere magic symbol of such love need have place. The drink is introduced, therefore, only in its more infantile significance, as Grimhild of the older tale used it to destroy the remembrance of the adult vows.⁶ Wagner's hero, too, enters through the potion into the bondage that destroys adult freedom.

The poet signifies the more adult union when he introduces the love drink in *Tristan and Isolde*. It brings to these lovers the clear acknowledgment of the love that hitherto had caused them both only the torture of conscious opposition to that which already existed unconsciously. The substance here is a symbol of the force of love which wells up to consciousness. Yet *Tristan and Isolde* were seeking rather an infantile goal, the draught of death, of oblivion toward reality, chosen in the despair caused by the repression and the inhibition of their desires. And in the end the draught of love has worked their death.⁷

⁴ See Rôheim, *Das Selbst.*, pp. 8 ff.; pp. 169 ff. for such value of food and drink. Cf. K. Abraham, *Dreams and Myths*, New York, 1913, Chap. XI, "Analysis of the Myth of the Origin of Nectar".

⁵ *Lieder d. ält. Edda*, "Sigrdrifumöl", pp. 318, 319; *Poetic Edda*, p. 389.

⁶ *Gripisspö*", l.c.; *Poetic Edda*, p. 349, note 33; *Volsunga-saga*, l.c.; Gering, *Die Edda*, p. 212, note 7.

⁷ Golther, *ibid.*, pp. 427-437, discusses the significance of the potion as Wagner has used it in distinction to the conventionally accepted use of it in the popular versions of the *Tristan and Isolde* tale. This gives an interesting

The effect of the magic potion has always been the expression of this vaguely perceived although little understood alternation between ordinary conscious control which represses the unconscious desires and the breaking through of the latter to take possession of the life, permanently or only for a time. The magic drink is used indeed among savages not so much as a symbolic but as a literally accepted means for inducing the change in the direction of the libido which the child must undergo at maturity. Actual unconsciousness is brought about through the use of some beverage and the parent is thus forgotten temporarily, a situation symbolic of the more lasting redirection of interest which is demanded.⁸ It is therefore a fitting symbol out of the unconscious of the folk to denote the departure of Siegfried from the adult path of love back to those attachments which are disloyalty to such love. His return again to the path of conscious memory of the adult love and of the object of this love's experience finds the same symbolic means.

Through the potion Siegfried is able to attain complete forgetfulness. Yet his nature shines in its clear honesty as before. Perhaps it is because there is no definite, consciously remembered history of former association with a loved parent, as in the life of Brünnhilde, that he can give himself up so freeheartedly to this regressive side of nature. His defection is like some dreams of the night which are carried through only with enjoyment, with no sense of wrong. Such dreams belong to those persons who are most free in their conscious waking action. All the compensation which their unconscious demands for the repression of childish wishes is obtained thus safely in sleep.⁹ Then, waking, they are ready to return untroubled to the responsibilities of reality. This is the sort of dream which is safe because it does not turn to action.¹⁰

In the drama, however, Siegfried's dream has turned to action background for the consideration of the adult and infantile characteristics in conflict in their love.

⁸ Th. Reik, *Probleme der Religionspsychologie*, Leipzig und Wien, 1919, pp. 103, 104, gives instances of the use of the magic drink in connection with initiation ceremonies for adolescents. Cf. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, Part VII, "Balder the Beautiful", Vol. II, pp. 266, 267.

⁹ Freud, *Interp. of Dreams*, pp. 445 ff.

¹⁰ Freud, *ibid.*, p. 448. See fragment from Heraclitus restated by Protagoras, F. C. S. Schiller, *Studies in Humanism*, London, New York, 1907, pp. 319, 320, "And do you suppose that if we acted on our dreams, we could with impunity do what we dream? Is it not merely because we lie still and do not stir, that we can indulge our fancies?"

so far that it has involved others in situations into which they cannot enter so lightly. It brings in the end his own death. Lightheartedly as he may toy with the bidding of the unconscious phantasies, this proves a dangerous thing. It is significant of the evil nature of the bondage into which Siegfried thus unwittingly enters that it is a turning back into the family. His betrayal of adult sex love is made the more easy because he has imposed upon himself bondage to another's need, a traditional duty of knightly honor sealed by the covenant of blood brotherhood. In the relation of Siegfried to the Gibichungen Wagner has again adopted legendary custom bound with legendary history yet with that striking individuality of treatment which gives room to the psychic importance of the situation. It is these bonds of family union that work woe to the individual love. The apparently natural ties of family love, illegitimate when they would prolong love "beyond the inevitable change", involve even the free Siegfried in their devastating curse. It is the curse which also blights Brünnhilde's happiness and stains her honor. Thus the egotism of the former generation effects its tragedy.

The psychic conflict within Brünnhilde casts its shadow before the events have come to pass. Her freedom seems secure as she awaits upon the fire-bound rock her husband's return. The stormy aspect of Waltraute's visit first darkens her joy. It is a sign to her that the past is not eradicated from her nature nor absent from the course of events. It has appeared in specious form to lead her, if possible, through pity into sacrifice of her love's pledge. It shall now appear in terrorizing form and that with her lover's own presence at hand. Now shall her senses grow confused indeed between the two trends of psychic desire. It is the lover's horn which her ears perceive but this is not his expected form which she sees. And yet, is it not? Why the power that gleams from that ill-concealed eye? That significant symbol of the flashing power of reproductive love, so frequently introduced throughout these dramas, cannot yield completely to the bondage which has overtaken Siegfried. Unaware, he permits it to outshine his concealment, while Brünnhilde's recognition of it is a sign that her conscious control has not altogether deserted her. It aids her later also to hold to the knowledge, however darkly, that reality still lies behind all this deceit, "A single glance of his light-flashing eye—that even through the lying shape streamed brightly to me—" (VI, 228 G).

Gunther, well endowed only in appearance, is utterly powerless to pass through love's fiery demands to approach his bride. Sieg-

fried, for the first time having entered into bondage to falsely directed love, has made, however, only a partial surrender to such illegitimate phantasy. He has not lost the power of breasting the flames nor of compelling the woman to follow him as he bids. Yet the power which he exercises is not now an untarnished one. His tone of authority is no longer Siegfried's own but rather a poor counterfeit of that impotent brother figure whose form he has partially assumed.¹¹ This is an echo of that authority of evil parental domination which serves unconscious ends. It is not his nature's clear voice of invitation to love's free surrender. To make it compelling Siegfried must first snatch away the pledge of freedom so that this once more becomes the emblem of evil domination. Then indeed Brünnhilde's power of independent action is gone. There is now none of the former joy with which the lovers voluntarily united with one another. Sworn fealty to the brother, representative of the family bondage, a return also to the plane of attachment within his own sex, binds Siegfried from the love that should have been his to share with the bride, "His wife deceiving, true to his friend—from his own beloved—the one alone dear to him—he severed himself by his sword" (VI, 252 G). This loyalty to the friend to whom brotherhood has been sworn is only a confusing gloss of a double evil, an attempt to serve both ends of an attachment. The result is manifold distrust and shame.

Again there is the multiplied picture which so faithfully represents the widespread conflict of psychic factors. Gunther becomes the merely nominal possessor of a passionately resistant bride. He himself is the victim of a slowly enveloping shame under which at last he sinks defenseless. Having given tacit consent to the slaying of his nobler friend, he himself meets death at the hand of the hateful brother, Hagen, as he attempts to prevent the latter's greedy theft of the ring. The theft does not take place because the hand of the dead Siegfried rises with a symbolic reminder that even in death love bears the ascendancy over hate.

Gutrune's love is disturbed by mistrust of the extent to which Siegfried's errand for her brother shall have brought him into contact with the woman he has won for Gunther. Siegfried is able to reassure her for the moment in the joy of external festivities yet later strange fears haunt her of the woman who belongs to such another sphere than Gutrune herself. Gutrune, like Gunther, in the

¹¹ See Wagner's stage direction for Siegfried's change of voice (VI, 206 G).

attachment which belongs to the phantasied desires of the unconscious, is bound at home and offers but a mere shadow of the love which Siegfried knew in Brünnhilde. Based on unrealities such attachment is a prey to the fear of uncertainties in the face of every real event. One glance and a word from the true wife whose place the exponent of such unreal phantasy has taken and Guttrune, abased and crushed with pain, turns helpless to her brother's corpse. There she belongs, there within the family, unable to fill a place beside the free hero of the world. As mistress only has she ever bound him, never his true wedded wife (VI, 250, 251 G).

Love that is founded in the things of reality may be cast down but it cannot be destroyed. It is able to attain that greatest victory of all, to rise from the tragedy of its own errors, brought about in a moment of weakness. Hagen is abroad with the hunting party in order to fulfill Brünnhilde's mission of vengeance. To such depths had her love descended that the envious malice of this cowardly figure could be entrusted with the one secret of Siegfried's mortality. The love of the eternal woman had left him vulnerable in one point, that spot which no hero could ever have found, "Not an art was known to me that was not brought to safeguard his body!" complains Brünnhilde now. "Unwitting my magic charm held him, which now from wounds keeps him safe." And to Hagen's question whether then no harm can reach him she answers, "In battle, no; yet—strikest thou him in the back. Never—that knew I—would he yield to the foe, never offer him, fleeing, the back; here then I laid not the spell" (VI, 228, 229 G). Thus she acquiesces in this base road to his death. Out of such degradation of her love, nevertheless, Brünnhilde seeks the quieting effect of clearer knowledge. The night of strange uncertainty finds Guttrune fluttering in helpless timidity about the ancestral halls. Evil dreams have broken her rest. Life presents much that is beyond her vision. The conflict of that wild woman whose laugh has wakened her from sleep is outside her comprehension. She can only fear her. Siegfried is absent, there is no one on whom she can rely. Brünnhilde, however, has sought a greater solitude where she may wrestle to find the truth.

It was indeed she whom Guttrune saw pacing along the Rhine (VI, 247 G). There alone in the night her conflict is solved. Unknowingly she turns back to the beginning of all the sorrow. The strong woman, who once resolutely had chosen the path of adulthood, for whom this path, however, has been beset with unforeseen evil, finds herself now at the very source of life where good and evil

began. She walks by the river Rhine, which long ago cradled the forms of innocent joy. It witnessed the entrance of the selfishness which turned the object of that joy to a malignant curse. Now Brünnhilde comes upon the sorrowing figures still mourning their childhood loss. Such communion with the past, like the bringing into consciousness of the forgotten things buried in the unconscious, can bring only true knowledge of the events that have intervened. Recognition of the place of this past, its rightful claims at the beginning of life, shall restore love to its possibilities.

The object of love even now is slain; the woes through which love has passed cannot be obliterated. Yet even its sorrow opens to it a new sphere. It shall look through compassion to a future age. Brünnhilde's wounded love shall find its healing in a pity which extends the love once realized into this wider sphere. The lovers shall be reunited in the sacrifice of death, while the glories of Walhall, which once surrounded Brünnhilde's life, shall be permitted to pass. Thus shall the way be opened for new opportunities for a race to come. Wagner, late in his life, in an open letter, distinguishes between that compassion [*Mitleid*] which is the foundation of social morality and mere commiseration [*Bedauern*] toward suffering.¹² Such true compassion is evidenced in the love which comes to its triumph in Brünnhilde's willing entrance into the fate that is her lover's. We cannot overlook here the redemption which Wagner always sought in his music dramas for the love itself, which to his mind was thus cleansed by death from its oversensuality. Kapp well points out that the root of this striving against the excess of sensual elements, represented in the dramas in the motive of redemption, lay in the contrast between Wagner's love experiences, with his intense unsatisfied longings, and his unattainable ideal.¹³ Psychoanalysis, as has been noted, recognizes in Wagner's unsatisfied cravings and in the elements present in his experiences, the partial infantile goals of desire. Therefore it finds in Brünnhilde's redeeming love, in spite of its passage over into death, the expression of the consummation of the adult love in its complete triumph over the partial withdrawal of the libido to the separate ends of the self. There are those earlier dramas in which death was rather a surrender of the child to the love demand of the parent or his substitute. Or death becomes only a withdrawal from the conflict which such demand brings into being. Here, however, Brünnhilde has already chosen that the past shall no

¹² X, pp. 196, 197, "Schreiben an Herrn E. v. Weber."

¹³ Kapp, *ibid.*, pp. 264, 265.

longer exert its claim upon her and with Siegfried she enters upon a death which shall figure the complete emancipation of the libido from all the elements which have bound it.

Brünnhilde's compassion, newly awakened by the knowledge imparted by the daughters of the Rhine, shall perform its first work in the restoration of the gold to its ancient simplicity of meaning. There in the children's lives it shall radiate only that beginning of loving care out of which greater love, not selfish possession, may arise. For now at last Brünnhilde perceives clearly the relation of the past to the present and to that which is to come. This grants her understanding of the evil which has afflicted love, of the errors into which she herself has fallen. It gives her back possession of herself, "Wise sisters of the water's deeps, swimming daughters of the Rhine, I thank you for friendly counsel!" (VI, 253 G). Now she may enter firmly and with a holy joy into the hall where the others are wildly lamenting, "Cease this noisy tumult of grief! . . . I heard children crying for their mother, because the sweet milk was spilled; but no lament has greeted me worthy of this noblest of heroes" (VI, 250 G).

For Siegfried lies dead before her. The Rhine maidens had counseled him, too, warning him that death was close at hand. They had begged from him the ring, restoration of which would have saved this final catastrophe. He could not grant it. Brünnhilde may give it back to them when love shall have proved itself rich enough to make a full expiation for all the ills forced upon it. Love, the greatest thing of all, because of its nature, of itself has no atonement to make. Yet its own greatness is proved not by its escape from the consequences of the evil which has come upon it but by its power to conquer, supreme to all hurt. Siegfried's fearlessness must not fail him merely to save his own life. On any other conditions the Rhine daughters might have had the ring, by offering this one they make it impossible.¹⁴ It is difficult for them, children still at the further end of life's experiences, to understand this, "just this ring which serves for his death,—just this circlet will he keep for himself!" (VI, 239 G).

He, like Brünnhilde, comes to understand the greater truth for, before his death, the bondage of his unconscious phantasy breaks to permit the past realities of life to well up in memory before him. He unwittingly has retained the one pledge of the real love that he

¹⁴ *Br.* XI, p. 39.

has known, for a time to forget it. Now, just before his death, it is as if the courageous rejection of the opportunity to save his life by casting love's pledge away brings the first release from the spell of phantasy by which he has been bound. His conscious thought begins to revert to the past. The events gone by pass in gradually clearer review before him. It may seem unexplained why the enemy, Hagen, again provides the drink, which this time shall undo the mischief the former draught wrought. Nevertheless, psychically it is appropriate that the unconscious bondage shall disperse itself by the same road over which it took possession. Hagen with his hatred is the symbol of this psychic way as he is the external agent.¹⁵ Dramatically, furthermore, it is evident that Hagen hopes to find in the onrush of memories something in which to justify his act of revenge. As often, however, evil overreaches itself. Evil desire after all is a blind guide to its own ends. The full confession of one's life, its experiences and emotions, is a revelation of truth. Only evil fears danger of further misunderstanding in a full revelation. Even for Gunther, easily misguided, knowledge brings full forgiveness toward Siegfried. Rather it removes all ground for the need of forgiveness for motives become clear and the dependence of these motives upon factors beyond the actor's conscious control. The larger relation of all things becomes evident. Now at last Gunther can perceive how miserably small is the part of his own personal advantage within the story of a great love and the development of life toward that love's mission. Thus he can bow now in sorrowful reverence before this life whose greatness he has discovered too late.

The day wanes with the departure of Siegfried's life. That life goes out in the final full vision of the reawakening Brünnhilde, whose imagined greeting smiles upon his lips: "Brünnhilde, holy bride—awake, open thine eyes!—Who enclosed thee again in sleep? Who bound thee in slumber so drear?—The awakener has come. He kisses thee awake and again he breaks the bonds of the bride. Then Brünnhilde laughs joyous for him!—Oh, this eye, ever now open, oh, this blessed warmth of thy breathing! Sweet is the passing—blissful the terror—Brünnhilde bestows on me—greeting!

¹⁵ Reik, *ibid.*, p. 104, note, gives a reference to the use of the magic drink in which the candidate for initiation will be injured by the drink if he does not speak the truth but will remain uninjured if he has spoken the truth.

Brünnhilde—
 heilige Braut—
 wach' auf! öff'ne dein Auge!—
 Wer verschloss dich
 wieder in Schlaf?
 wer band dich in Schlummer so bang?—
 Der Wecker kam;
 er küsst dich wach,
 und aber der Braut
 bricht er die Bande:—
 da lacht ihm Brünnhilde's Lust!—
 Ach, dieses Auge,
 ewig nun offen!
 Ach, dieses Atems
 wonniges Wehen!
 Süßes Vergehen—
 seliges Grauen—:
 Brünnhild' bietet mir—Gruss!" (VI, 246 G).

The poet has now but one message to convey. It is that of the triumph of a love that stops not even at death as it goes out beyond itself to unite with the nature of the race. It was necessary that the old order should pass that a new order might arise. This was the symbol in the poet's mind for the breaking of the tyranny of past desires, those desires which could not accept the reality of change. Death dissolved the sorrows of Tristan and Isolde in a dream of everlasting peace. They sank into the inexpressible bliss of the deepest longing of the unconscious, "in des Welt-Atems wehendem All—ertrinken—versinken—unbewusst—höchste Lust!" (VII, 81, *Tristan und Isolde*).¹⁶ These lines were written when Wagner's own life felt sorely the desire for rest from the sternness of a reality which denied him that which he most craved, the satisfying of his love for Mathilde.

Here this sense of the strong reality of love forgets rather than accepts death. It finds expression in the triumph with which Siegfried's body is borne through the night back to Brünnhilde's restored love. It is expressed by her in her clear rehearsal of the tragedy that came across their joy. She knows him fully now, the hero who was truest of all, yet betrayed her, the man to whom oaths and compacts

¹⁶ These words do not lend themselves to translation, standing as the breathing forth of Isolde's speechless longing which passes into death.

were most sacred, yet who broke them all (VI, 252 G). She knows him as the most faithful of lovers, although he, too, proved subject to the spell which the long train of base desires can weave about the greatest love. She knows the influence of the past, how the god whom once she revered and served could thus bring sorrow to her life and death to the lover to whom she had been given.

This is that long way of knowledge which the woman has trod. Brünnhilde is now the woman "knowing" through love. There has been a purpose for her in all that through which she has passed, "that knowing shall a woman become!" (VI, 252 G). "All, all! all I know", she can sing at last, "all is now clear to me!" (VI, 253 G), the greatness of love but the temptations also that follow the course of that love from its earliest beginnings. She, too, can forgive all. Or with her, too, the forgiveness is no longer needed in the light of knowledge of all. The father, author in so large part of the evil in her life, he, too, may rest. His end has come but the bitterness of this, likewise, shall be swallowed up in love's pitying redemption.

Again the strong reality is made manifest. The funeral pyre heaped high on the shores of the Rhine attests its triumph. The crackling flames of the fire that leap around it are only reminders of the unrestrained burning of love in its joy upon the mountain height. The song of the woman who has passed through all trials and emerged victorious repeats the same unconquerable nature of love. Her hand once more reaches out to Grane, that symbol of the strength of her nature's first freedom, when she rode unhindered through the air, and her horse swings with her upon the burning mound: "His horse lead hither, that with me the valiant one it may follow; for the hero's most sacred honor to share longeth mine own body. . . . Grane, my horse, greeting I give thee! Knowest thou, friend, whither I lead thee? In the fire glowing lies there thy lord, Siegfried, my blessed hero. Whinniest thou joyfully thy friend to follow? Draweth thee to him the laughing flame? Feel my breast, too, how it is burning; brightly the fire grips at my heart, him to enclasp, enfolded by him, in mightiest love with him to be wedded!—Heyaho, Grane, greet thy friend! Siegfried, Siegfried, blessed to thee my greeting!

Sein Ross führet daher,
dass mit mir dem Recken es folge:
denn des Helden heiligste
Ehre zu teilen

verlangt mein eig'ner Leib.—

.

Grane, mein Ross,
 sei mir gegrüsst!
 Weisst du, Freund,
 wohin ich dich führe?
 Im Feuer leuchtend
 liegt dort dein Herr,
 Siegfried, mein seliger Held.
 Dem Freunde zu folgen
 wieherst du freudig?
 Lockt dich zu ihm
 die lachende Lohe?—
 Fühl' mein Brust auch,
 wie sie entbrennt;
 helles Feuer
 fasst mir das Herz:
 ihn zu umschlingen,
 umschlossen von ihm,
 in mächtiger Minne
 vermählt ihm zu sein!—
 Heiaho! Grane!
 Grüsse den Freund!
 Siegfried! Siegfried!
 Selig gilt dir mein Gruss!" (VI, 251, 254–256 G).

Thus Brünnhilde, partner in love's redemption, joins the lover upon the burning pyre. Love, which has passed through all the vicissitudes to which the complexity of the psychic nature can subject it, though given to death, rises emancipated. For the flames in which the lovers are consumed symbolize love's deathless capacity for the endless renewal of life.

Thus has Wagner's drama followed womanhood from its earliest appearance in the form of innocent childhood. Here the maidens delight in the purest joy of mere existence untroubled as yet by any conflict of desires. Such untroubled bliss is not of long duration. Soon, we see, the parent's selfish desire awakes these children to the evil of life. Woman in childhood looks into the possibilities of mistake and sorrow beyond. She appears again in Fricka as the child grown to womanhood but undeveloped in her capacity for that love

which passes out beyond the infantile bonds. Again in Sieglinde the bondage is revealed but now in a form so expressive of the deepest unconscious fixation of love that to outward consciousness it appears only as bitter woe. Sieglinde is released by a transference of her love upon the brother, a transition out of the deeper bondage, though her joy is saddened by the earlier experience. Her sorrow, however, is turned to a more complete joy as she enters into the lonely motherhood through which her love finds full transition into the service of the race.

Yet once again woman's conflict is revealed and here in the open acceptance of the necessary severance from the father. Brünnhilde shows us the nature strong in itself as it has been vigorous and active in its service of the father. The childhood years, when this service was the permitted expression of filial devotion, are exchanged for the dawning knowledge of a different love which carries a new responsibility. For the sake of such a love obedience to the father must be refused. Devotion to his interest must be renounced. Fierce is the conflict on the part of daughter and of father. Nevertheless, it is resolutely won, the past life is dismissed through the magic slumber. The awakening brings the full tide of love's experience with the new lover. It brings, too, a realization of the evil which past fixation can work upon love. For a time this love is overwhelmed by a flood of bitterest shame and sorrow, so borne down that it is swept into the reaction of hate. Yet out of the depths into which it is drawn love rises with a renewed knowledge of its greater racial significance, a significance measured neither by life nor by death but extending throughout the unending alternation of both.

For this has Wagner revealed as the nature of love and of the reality in which love truly finds itself. This has he permitted his heroine to grasp in the full sacrifice of love's surrender. Not suffering but the opportunity of the fullest self-forgetfulness which is the fullest self-realization, this is the goal to which woman is brought. Thus the struggle of every life in some measure to realize this goal is presented to us in the creations of Wagner's drama. Through the masterly sympathy of his representation of woman we have been permitted to look upon the life concealed deep within the unconscious of the folk.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following list contains all of the works to which reference has been made throughout the text and a limited number of the other works which have been of definite help in forming the background out of which the study has grown. The number of these might have been greatly increased for the literature on Wagner now comprises an enormous mass of material of widely differing quality. Much of this has been consulted from time to time and has contributed in one way or another to the understanding of his life and work. Any general acknowledgment must include the files of the *Bayreuther Blätter*, which contain many thoughtful discussions of various characters of the *Ring* and of the part played by this work in Wagner's career. Though of stimulating interest, for the greater part they have not made a sufficiently definite contribution to the present work to justify the enumeration of the articles here. More specific acknowledgment should be made of indebtedness to Kapp, whose contributions have the stimulus of a fearless representation of facts on a background of true appreciation of Wagner's place in art and of the significance of the weaknesses as well as the virtues of human character. Of like importance is Newman's latest study of Wagner, in which the author, following Kapp, lays bare Wagner's faults in an even more incisive manner, while still paying high tribute to Wagner's place in the thought of mankind.

Nor is the bibliography of psychoanalytic works intended to be exhaustive. Here the literature grows apace, both in the formulation of the general principles of the science and its application to literary and other cultural fields. References have been limited to such of the works of Freud and his followers as bear directly on the present study. Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, a fundamental work, has been laid under tribute, while even more frequent reference has been made to his *Introduction to the Theory of Psychoanalysis*, a later work, which presents his theories in a form better suited to the lay reader. Furthermore, I have documented here and there from his *Kleine Schriften*, a collection of papers which is still in process of growth. Many other psychoanalytic studies might have been added, particularly those bearing upon the field of mythology and related sciences. For here extensive work has been done not only by Freud and his immediate followers but by the schools of Jung and other leaders. Frequent reference has been made to *Imago*, a periodical especially devoted to the application of psychoanalysis to literature

and the mental sciences. This periodical has contributed much of stimulus and guidance in the psychoanalytic study of literature and mythology for the work in hand.

The field of folklore is far too large for more than a few guiding references to the material, which serves so often to support the poet's situations and which reveals the unconscious in the making. It is the record of the formation of that hidden unconscious out of which the poet reveals the nature of man or woman. Free use has been made of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, since in it he has formulated with unusual clearness the nature and the place of the unconscious in relation to the conscious life and has discussed fully the relation between intuition and intellect.

Critical evaluation of individual references will be found in the footnotes. Special acknowledgment of the value of certain works most important for this study is contained in the Foreword.

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INDEX

- Alberich, 40, 41, 43, 49, 51, 52, 59ff, 80, 83ff, 103, 105
- Ambivalent father nature, 59
- Art, 14
 - goal of, 15
 - relief of repression, 5
- Artist, 10
 - as dreamer, 5
 - unconscious of, 9
- Beckmesser, 29
- Beethoven, 6
- Bergson, xiii
- Birth symbolization, 39
- Bisexuality, 18
- Blood brotherhood, 109
 - "life principle", 88
 - mysterious power, 87, 88
- Body values, 20
- Brother-sister attachment, 33, 103
 - envy and jealousy, 104
 - marriage, 58
 - regression, 103
- Brünnhilde, 7ff, 25, 34, 35, 41, 54, 66ff, 91, 92, 94ff, 102ff
- Brynhild, 7
- Bülöw, Cosima von, 32
- Character traits, nutritive-waste, 21
- Childhood love, xiv
 - Wagner's, 9
- Child-parent relationship, 25, 31
- Children's sex, 26
- Child, sexual character of, 18
- Compromise, 6
- Conflict of opposing tendencies, 22
- Cosima von Bülöw, 32
- Creative force, Loge as, 50, 79
- Day dreams, 5, 10
- Defense, ego, 105
- Dismemberment, 82
- Displacement, symbolic, 107
- Divine father, 69, 77
- Divinity as unconscious wish, 75
- Donner, 49
- Draught of death, 107
 - of forgetfulness, 106
- Dream, 5, 6, 7, 17, 92, 94, 108
 - ideal, 39
 - individual and universal, 17
 - of Sieglinde, 64, 65
 - of Wotan, 45
- Dreamer, artist as, 5
- Dreams, 101, 108
 - day, 5, 10
- Drink, magic, 103, 104, 108, 114 note
 - of remembrance, 107
- Dynamic, xiii, 3, 4, 11, 13
- Ego defense, 105
 - instincts, 11
 - interest, 13, 18
 - interests, xiii, 25
 - pathways, separate, 20
- Elisabeth, 28
- Elsa, 28
- Erda, 53, 54, 56, 59, 67, 83, 88ff, 96, 101
- Eva, 29
- Eye as symbol, 44, 109
- Fafner, 60, 85, 94
- Father as aggressor, 42
 - divine, 69, 77
- Father-daughter attachment, 32, 42
 - relationship in Wagner's dramas, 27, 28
 - in Wagner's personality, 29
- Father's dominance, 72
 - unconscious infantile, 40
- Fecal area, 20
 - interest, 21
- Fixation in family group, 58, 62
- Flying Dutchman, The*, 28
- Folk, 10, 14, 58
 - creative impulse of, 13
 - myth of, xv
 - unconscious of, xiv, 1, 2, 10, 118

- Freia, 45, 46
 Freud, viii, xii, xiv, 10, 12, 13, 18, 33
 Fricka, 12, 43ff, 56, 62, 63, 65, 76, 117
 Froh, 49

 Genetic, 3, 17
 Glasenapp, 9, 45
 Gold as symbol, xiv, 21, 41
 Graf, viii
 Grane, 96, 102, 116, 117
 Grimhild, 107
 Grimhilde, 84
 Gunther, 84, 103ff, 109, 110, 114
 Gutrune, 104, 110, 111

 Hagen, 52, 83ff, 103, 104, 111, 114
 Hans Sachs, 29
 Horse as symbol, 96 note, 102, 116
 Hunting, 59, 62, 64, 65

 Icelandic legend, 7
 saga, 78
 sources, 106
 tale, 107
 Impulses, elemental, 4
 unconscious, xii
 Infantile, artist's material, 5
 father's unconscious, 40
 fixation, 22
 goals, 26, 27
 ideals, 4
 impulses in parents, 27
 Inferiority, 80
 Instinct, reproductive, 11, 13, 18, 27
 Instincts, ego, 11
 Intellectual conception, 14
 ideas, 1
 investigator, 10
 thought, xiv, xv
 Interest, ego, 13, 18
 Intestinal difficulty, Wagner's, 23
 Intuition, 10 note
 Wagner's, xii
 Intuitions, poet's, 1
 Intuitive perception, 14
 Irene, 28
 Isolde, 7, 29, 107, 115

 Kapp, xi, ix
 Kastner, ix
 Klingsor, 29
 Kriemhild, 7
 Kundry, 29

 Laussot, Jessie, 30
 Libido, 13, 101
 striving, 24
 Libido's reproductive aims, 25
 Loge, 46, 48ff, 79
Lohengrin, 28, 48
 Lucka, Emil, viii

 Magic drink, 103, 104, 108, 114 note
 potion, 106, 108
 slumber, 78, 118
 Marke, King, 29, 32
 Marriage, brother-sister, 58
 Masculine defense, 55, 78
 nature in woman, 55, 78, 102
 strength in male, 87
 Mathilde, 31, 34, 115
Meistersinger, 29
 Mensendieck, viii
 Mime, 80ff
 Minna, 31, 36, 37, 43, 45
 Morality of Wagner's dramas, 49, 59
 Mother as rival, 28, 56
 fixation, 54
 Wagner and, 9, 30, 35, 36, 37
 Mother-son attachment, 29, 32
 Music, x, 2, 3, 16, 24, 35
 Myth, xi, 13, 14, 49, 75
 of the folk, xv
 Mythological, 13, 58, 78, 82
 Mythology, 7
 Myths reflection of nature, 14

 Narcissism, 97
 Narcissus, 97
 Newman, 23
Nibelungenlied, 7
 Nine, 54
 Ninth Symphony, 6
 Norne, 43
 Nornen, 101, 102

- Nutritive, 27, 80, 81
 Nutritive-waste character traits, 21

 Object love, 19, 22
 Œdipus, 33, 44
 complex, 33
 Ortrud, 28, 48, 63, 99

 Parent love, 33
 rival, 56
 Parsifal, 80
Parsifal, 29
 Planer, Minna, 31
 Pleasure principle, 19, 26, 27, 76
 Potion, magic, 106, 107
 Primitive, 4, 5
 elements, 42
 emotions, 7

 Rank, viii
 Reality, 5, 66, 73, 111, 115, 116
 multiplicity of, 3
 principle, 19, 76
 Redemption motive in Wagner, 112
 Regression, 27, 102
 Repression, xii, xiii, 4
 Reproductive instinct, 11, 13, 18, 27,
 81
 power, 12
 Resymbolized, 7
 Rhine maidens, 40, 113
 Rienzi, 28
 Ring as symbol, xiv, 12, 21, 28, 41, 95
 Ritter, Frau Julie, 31
 Rosalie, 30

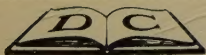
 Sadistic, 54
 Savage lore, 20
 Schroeder-Devrient, 30
 Senta, 28
 Sex in child, 17, 18
 Siegfried, 7ff, 14, 25, 36, 43, 55, 68,
 79ff, 90, 91, 94ff, 102, 113
 Sieglinde, 59ff, 67, 71ff, 90ff, 97, 105,
 118
 Siegmund, 46, 59ff, 67, 70, 71, 77
 Sigdrifa, 107
 Sigurd, 7, 107
 Sister attachment, Wagner's, 59

 Skin disorders, 22
 Slumber, magic, 78, 118
 Sophocles, 33
 Sources, Wagner's, xi
 Sword as symbol, 46
 Symbol, 6
 eye as, 44, 109
 horse as, 96 note, 109, 116
 ring as, xiv, 12, 21, 28, 41, 95
 Symbolism, 8

 Tannhäuser, 28
Tannhäuser, 28
 Tristan, 7, 29, 107, 115
Tristan and Isolde, 29, 107, 115

 Unconscious, xiii, 3
 impulses, xii
 infantilism, xiv
 memories, 83
 of artist, 9
 of the folk, xiv, 1, 2, 10, 118
 psychology of, 2
 source of art, vii, 1, 4

 Wagner and mother, 9, 30, 35, 36, 37
 Minna, 45
 redemption motive in, 112
 Wagner's childhood experiences, 9
 creative activity, 35
 illnesses, 22
 infantile fixation, 22
 goals, 112
 interpretation, 15
 longing for children, 34
 personality, 23
 sister attachment, 59
 Walküre, 74, 78, 89, 107
 Walküren, 34, 56, 71, 92, 93
 Walther, 29
 Waltraute, 57, 91, 92, 102
 Wanderer, 77, 83, 89ff
 Wesendonck, Mathilde, 31, 34
 Otto, 32
 Wille, Frau Dr. Eliza, 31
 Wodan, 94
 Wolfram, 28, 29
 Wotan, 12, 25, 27, 33ff, 42ff, 49ff, 59,
 60, 65ff, 79, 81, 83, 88ff, 94, 101,
 102, 104, 105



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